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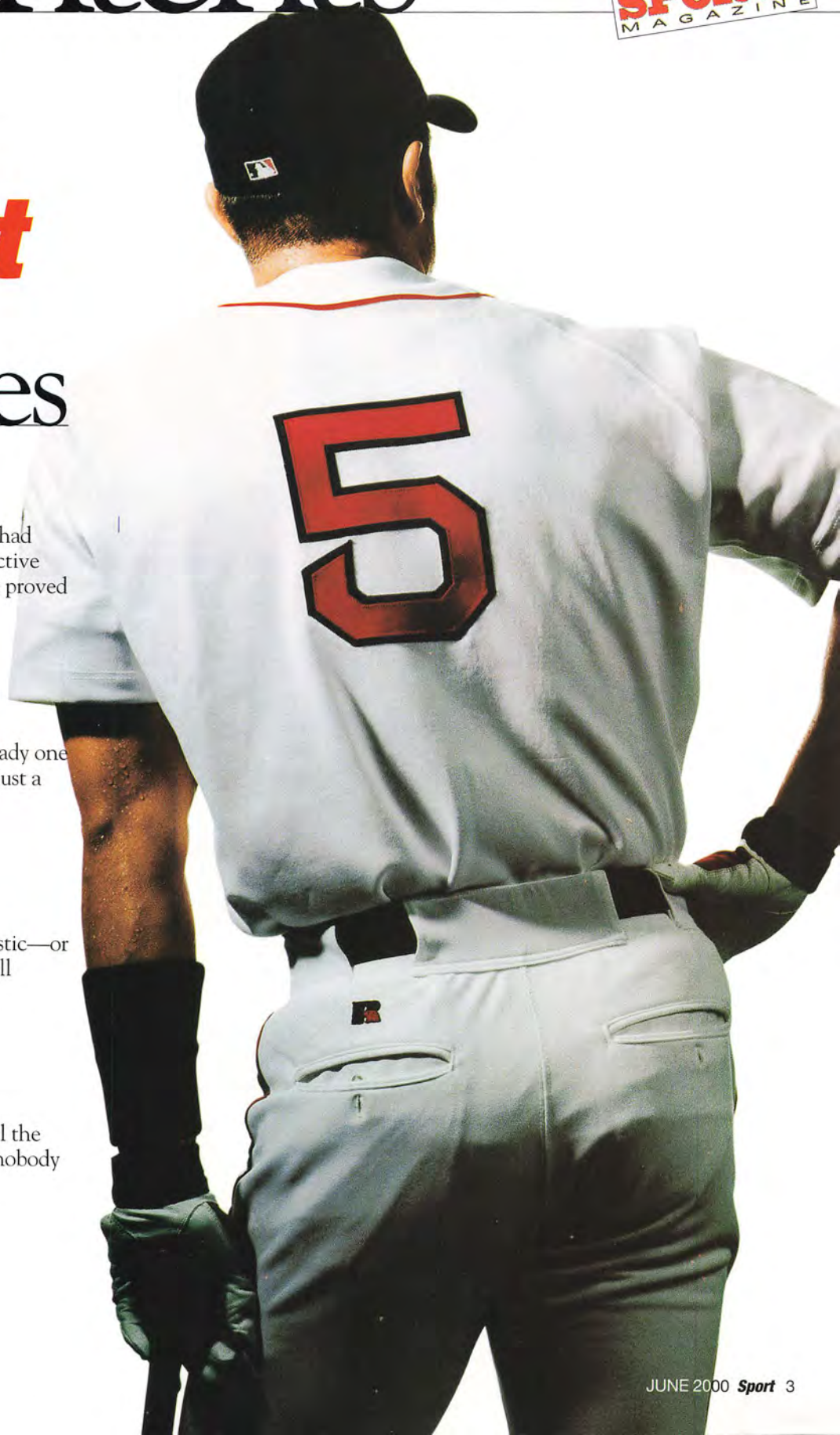

MICHAEL INDRESANO

Cover photo by Michael Indresano

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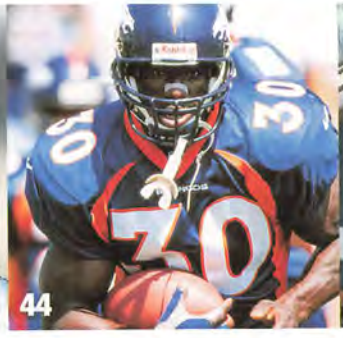

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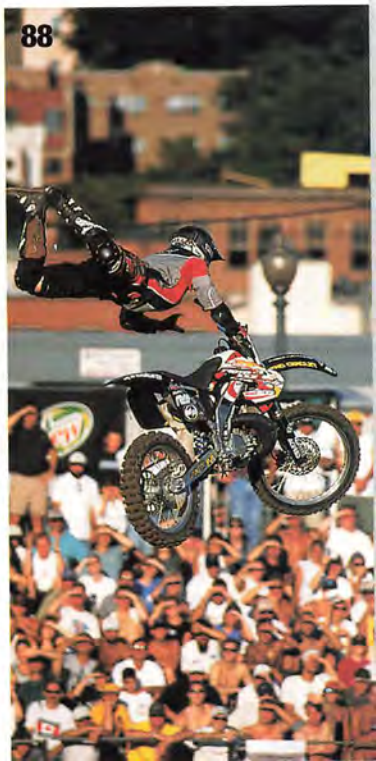

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BRIAN SPURLOCK; RICH KANE; BRIAN PORCO; JOAN BEARD; JOHN GILLOOLY/PEI; D.CLARKE EVANS/NBA PHOTOS

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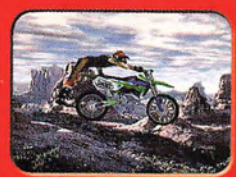

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FAST. FASTER. FASTEST. FASTBACK. FASTBALL. FASTEN. Fastidious. Fastigate. Fastigium. Fastening. Fastness. Fascinating isn't it? This obsession we sometimes fancy over being fast. Maybe it's because we're always in a rush to facilitate this need or that. Or perhaps we like all things fast because of its many facets: speed, danger, risk, reward ....

Even as our fast-paced society becomes more and more facetious and less and less genuine, we are faced with a time in history when the fastest only seem to get faster. Fastly and vastly. So there you have it. SPORT'S reasoning behind presenting our fastest Impact ever. Well, kind of. As long as you take it at face-value and reject the impulse to fast-forward through these next few pages. —*Edited by Brandon Gruner*

FASTEST TO THE QB **Jevon Kearse, Tennessee Titans**

"Early last year, I was pretty much getting hit a lot or getting tackled on the pass rush. Later, when I realized the line was beat, I just went full speed ahead and did what I had to do. Now I'd say I'm probably redefining the position. Teams need to know where No. 90 is at all times, and that's helping the team out."

FASTEST PITCH **Randy Johnson, Arizona Diamondbacks**

"Back in high school, for every pitch I threw on someone's knees to strike him out, three or four more would get to the backstop. I realize now it is part of the learning process, but at that time it was certainly frustrating, even throwing as hard as I did. Success didn't happen for me as early as it did for others. I think I still hold the record for walks in our high school region. Only when you learn to harness your fastball is it a blessing."

KEARSE: TOM DIPACE; JOHNSON: MICHAEL ZITO/SPORTSCHROME

FASTEST ON THE DRAW | **Mats Sundin, Toronto Maple Leafs**

"Effectiveness on the draw is a combination of timing and speed and strength. I've been playing at center for seven years and I don't really work on my speed, necessarily. I just make sure I watch the puck and the quickness comes on its own."

QUICKEST TO THE BALL | **Brian McBride, Columbus Crew**

"Growing up I fine-tuned my accuracy and timing in the air by heading the ball back-and-forth against a wall. Every other touch would be a jump header and then I'd have to get back to the wall after a jump header, which is pretty difficult. I don't know if that would work for anybody else, but that benefitted my ability to win head balls."

MCBRIDE: BBS; SUNDIN: BRUCE BENNETT/HAMEDDIN/MLS/ALLSPORT

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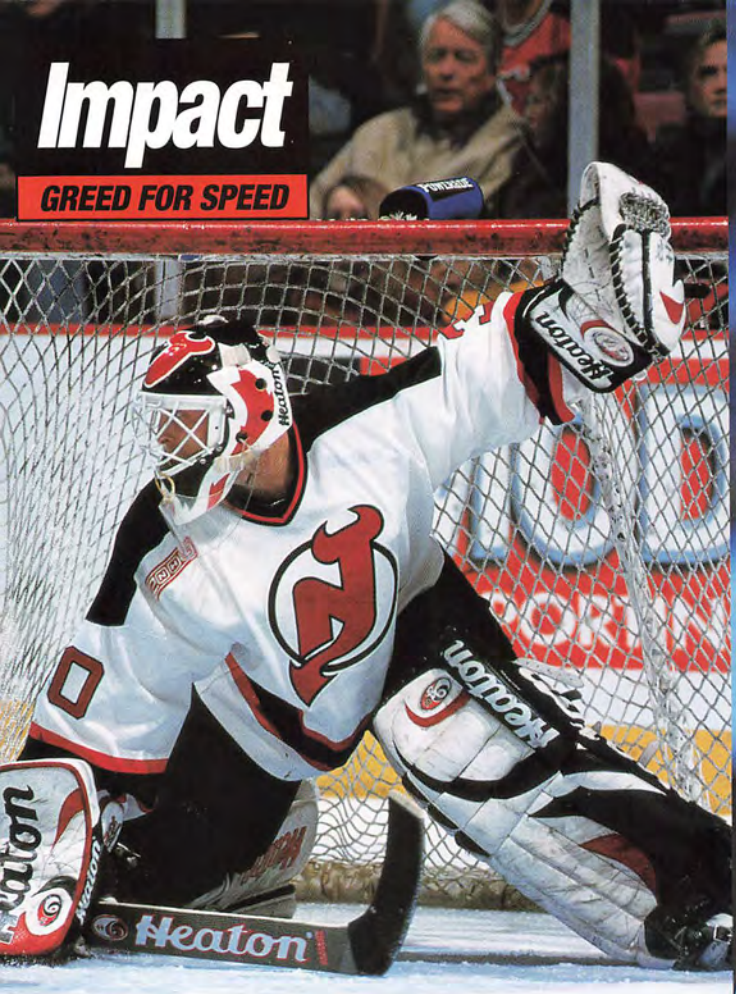
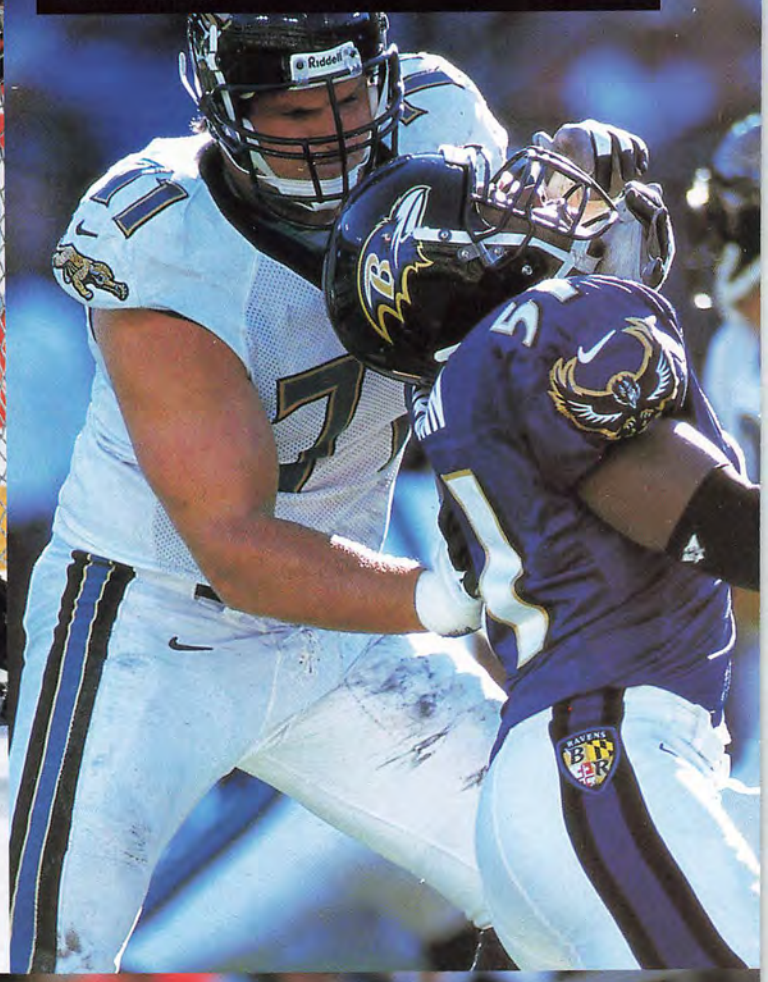


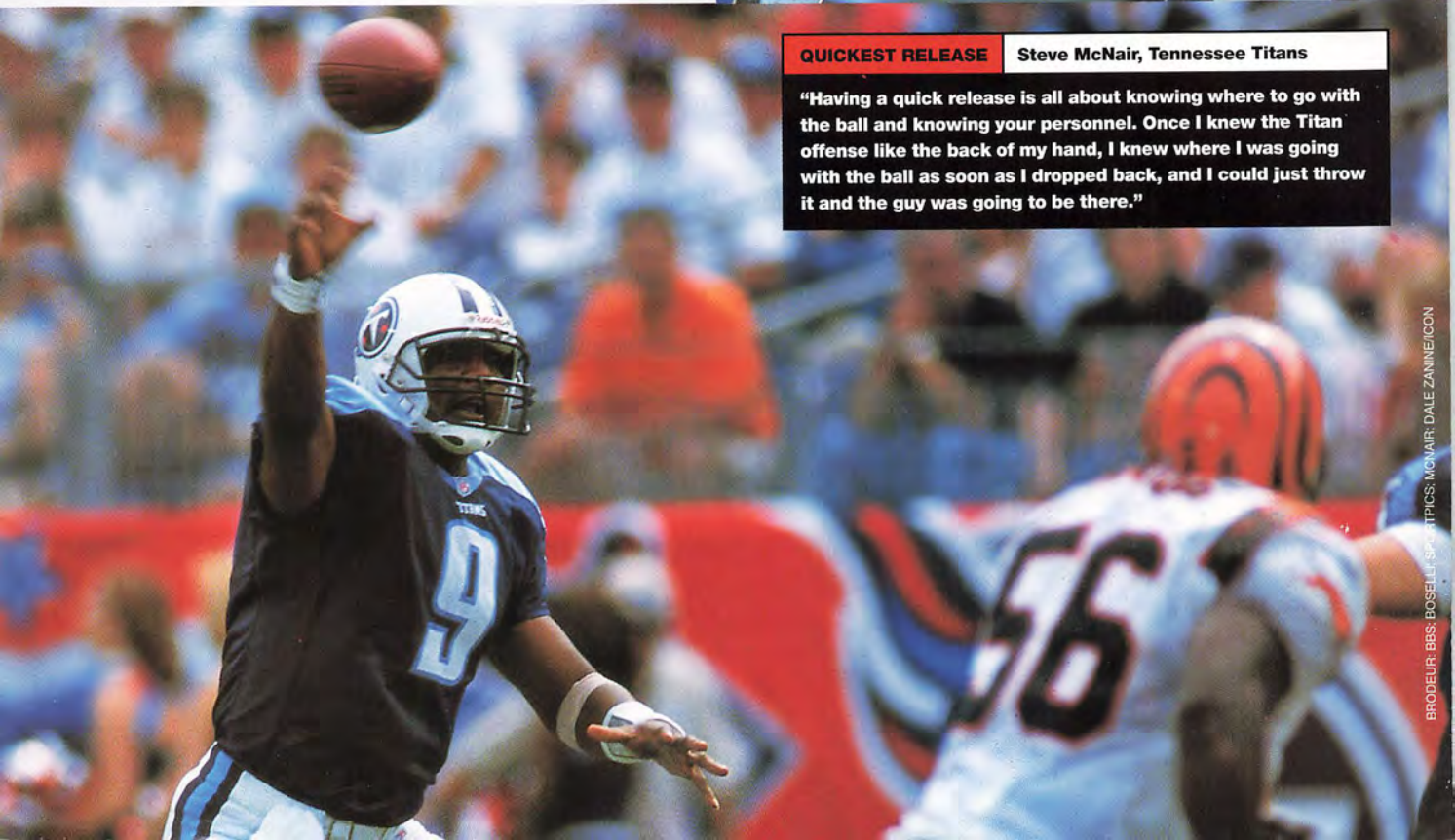
QUICKEST IN THE NET — **Martin Brodeur, New Jersey Devils**

"Quickness in front of the net is a combination of both mental and physical ability. Mentally you see the play develop and you get ready; then your physical ability takes over and hopefully you're quick enough to make the play."

FASTEST OFF THE LINE — **Tony Boselli, Jacksonville Jaguars**

"The quicker you get off the ball and get into the defensive line, you get an advantage because you are one step ahead of them. Anytime you can beat someone off the ball you have a natural advantage."

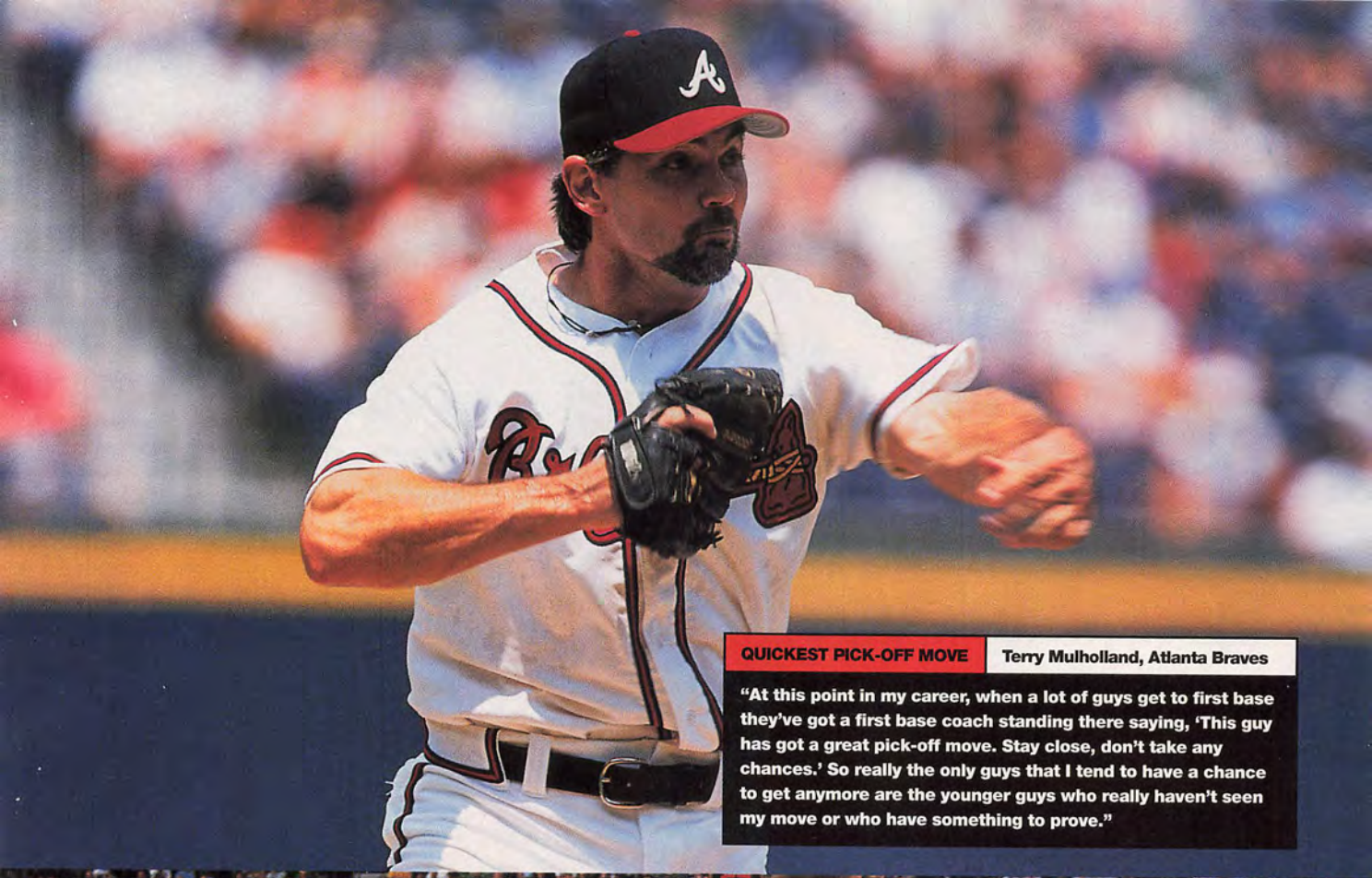




QUICKEST RELEASE — **Steve McNair, Tennessee Titans**

"Having a quick release is all about knowing where to go with the ball and knowing your personnel. Once I knew the Titan offense like the back of my hand, I knew where I was going with the ball as soon as I dropped back, and I could just throw it and the guy was going to be there."

BRODEUR: BBS; BOSELLI: SPORTPICS; MCNAIR: DALE ZANINE/ICON



QUICKEST PICK-OFF MOVE | **Terry Mulholland, Atlanta Braves**

"At this point in my career, when a lot of guys get to first base they've got a first base coach standing there saying, 'This guy has got a great pick-off move. Stay close, don't take any chances.' So really the only guys that I tend to have a chance to get anymore are the younger guys who really haven't seen my move or who have something to prove."

QUICKEST TO THE PLAY | **John Stockton, Utah Jazz**

"Court vision comes just from playing a lot of basketball. I don't think it's court sense exactly, or anything too special. It's just from playing so many times. Whether it's ratball games in the gym or games in the driveway, situations develop in front of you and it's like, 'I've seen this before.' You draw on that."

MULHOLLAND: CHRIS HAMILTON; STOCKTON: DON GRAYSTON/NBA PHOTOS

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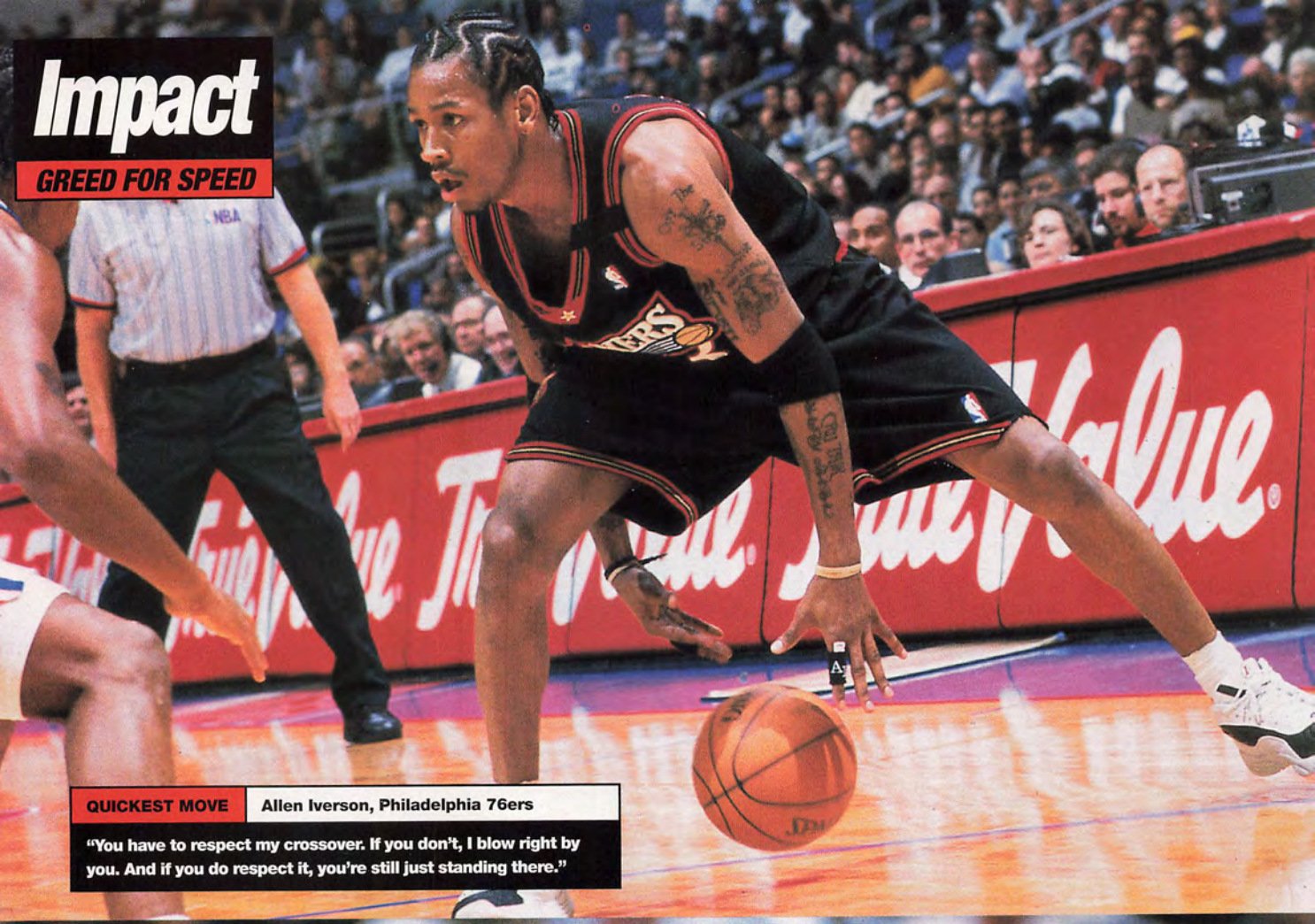


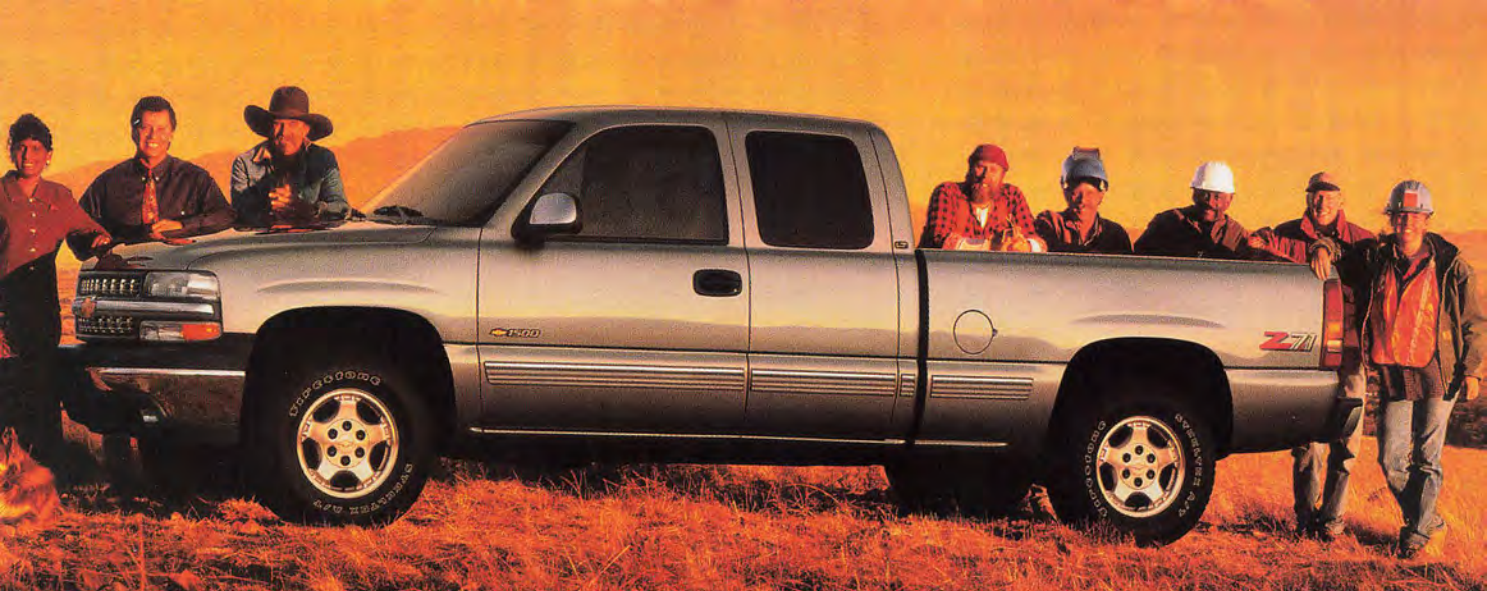
QUICKEST MOVE | **Allen Iverson, Philadelphia 76ers**

"You have to respect my crossover. If you don't, I blow right by you. And if you do respect it, you're still just standing there."

FASTEST SNEAK ATTACK | **Ivan Rodriguez, Texas Rangers**

"I am always working on my quickness, on my feet and the accuracy of my throw to second base. I'm not afraid to throw the ball in any situation because if you are afraid, you don't make good plays. And they know in the league that I can throw the ball anywhere."

IVERSON: ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN/NBA PHOTOS; RODRIQUEZ: DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS



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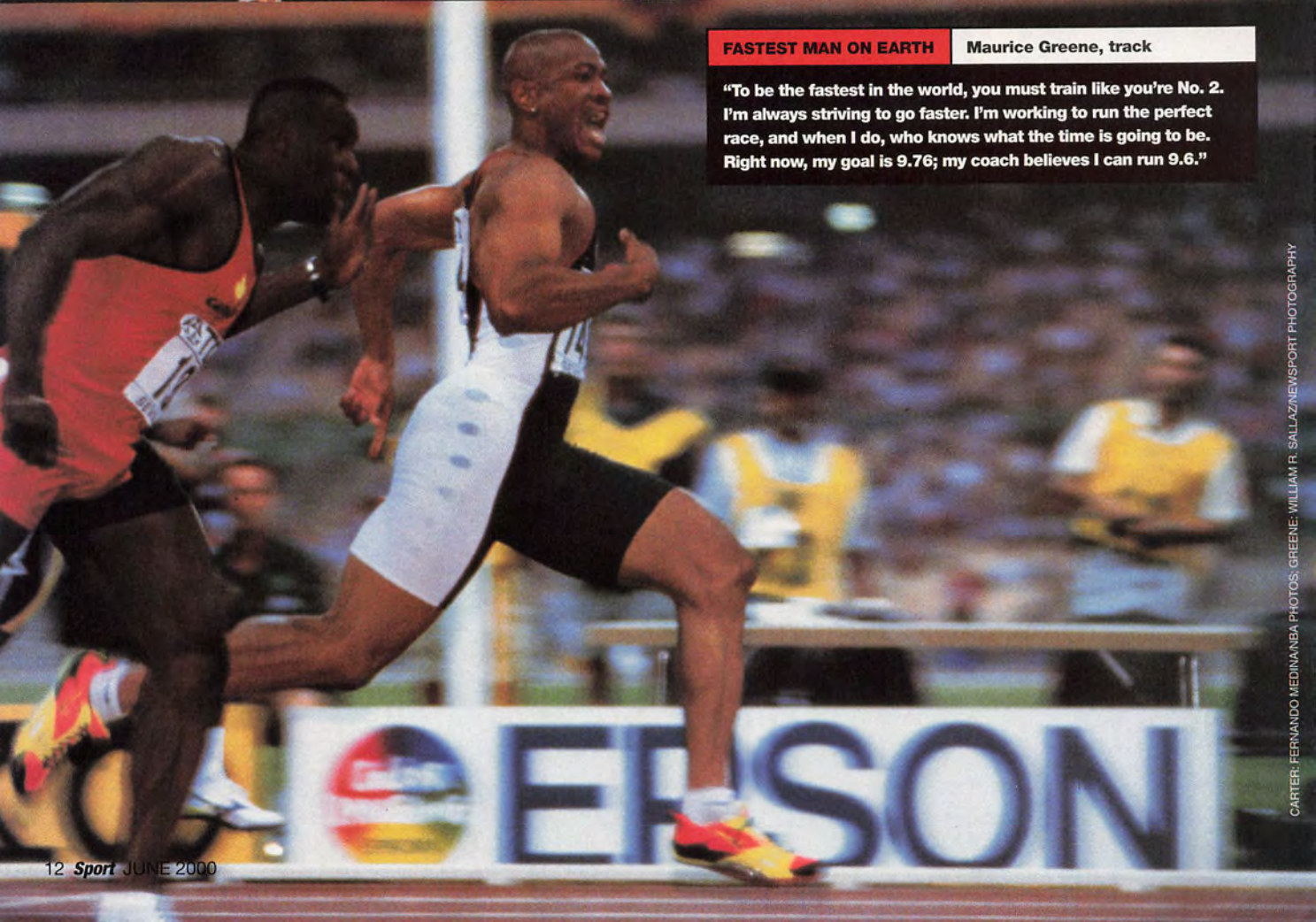
FASTEST MAN OFF EARTH | **Vince Carter, Toronto Raptors**

"I'm shying away from dunking on people nowadays because when you try it the second time, it doesn't work. You pay for it and I've learned that I have to get better. I have to have a Plan B, something new. I have to have a counter, because everybody knows what I can do. Speed can make the difference."



FASTEST MAN ON EARTH | **Maurice Greene, track**

"To be the fastest in the world, you must train like you're No. 2. I'm always striving to go faster. I'm working to run the perfect race, and when I do, who knows what the time is going to be. Right now, my goal is 9.76; my coach believes I can run 9.6."

CARTER: FERNANDO MEDINA/NBA PHOTOS; GREENE: WILLIAM R. SALLAZ/NEWSPORT PHOTOGRAPHY

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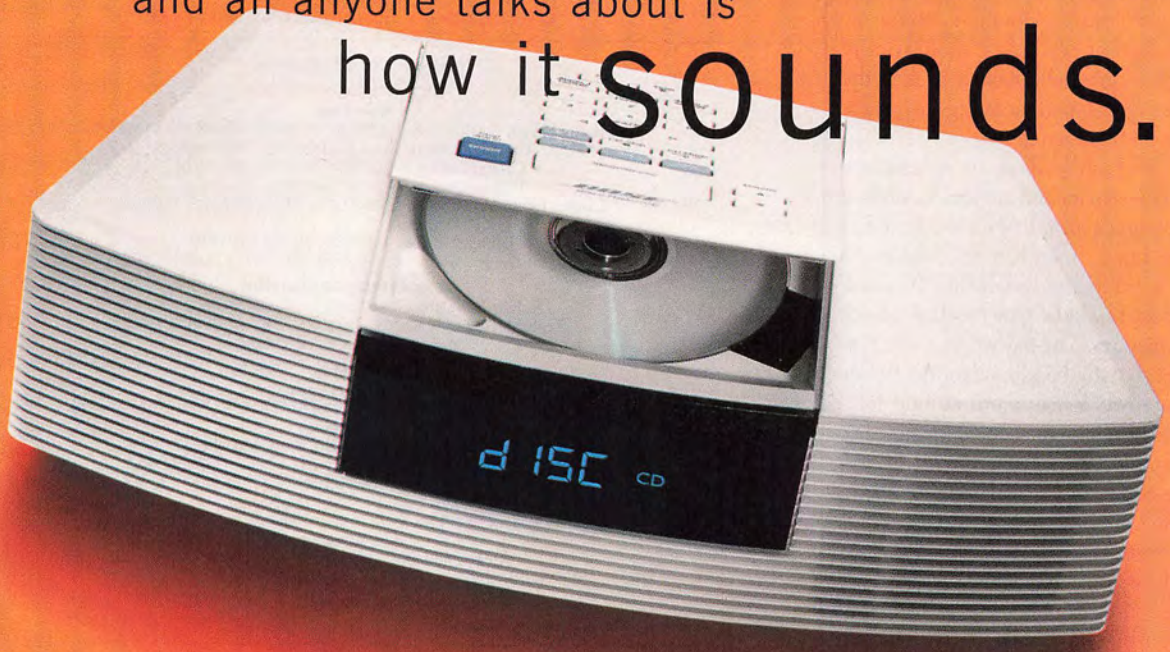
To think, all that time making it small, and all anyone talks about is how it sounds.



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editor's note

PATHETIC IS WHAT IT IS. DOWNRIGHT pathetic.

As baseball fans go, we're a pretty miserable bunch. Scattered amongst our staff is a Royals fan (me), a Cubs fan, a Phillies fan, a Mets fan and yes, oh yes, there's the ever-present, ever-miserable, Red Sox fan. Add those puppies together and you've got a grand total of 27 World Series appearances in the last 100 years, yielding a whopping 10 championships. People might call us idiots for some of our preseason selections sometimes, but they'll never be able to call us frontrunners.

Now, consider that we live and work in baseball's answer to Disneyland—absurdly bankrolled New York, home of the 25-time world champion Yankees and well, does the term "rub salt in your gaping wound" mean anything to you? If nothing else we've got the celebration thing so ingrained in our heads, that should one of our hapless clubs ever make it back to the party, we've got part-time gigs as parade planners all but sewn up.

All of which leads us to at least one staffer's latest savior and our June cover boy, Nomar Garciaparra. In Nomar, Red Sox fans see hope, a shot at redemption, a chance to rid themselves of Billy B's memory forever. The kid is pure baseball. Check out the pictures. The day we shot him outside of Boston, his buddy and former BoSox teammate Mo Vaughn was around for a charity event. Now, you could imagine Mo as a running back, but Nomar? He'd look about as comfortable in an NFL uniform as he would in a tu-tu. Baseball. Pure baseball.

So, instead of sending our Red Sox diehard up for a Red Sox love-fest, we deployed the Cubbie among us, Scott Burton, so that he could tell us the real info about Nomar. Guess what? There's more to Nomar than just baseball, as you'll read in the piece that starts on page 36.

One other thing; this is my last issue as editor of SPORT. After two years and many great memories, I'm handing the keys to the executive bathroom over to John Roach, who's got some terrific, ambitious plans for the magazine in the months to come. You're in great hands.

Thanks for everything (especially that dude in prison who keeps writing expletive-laced postcards … don't stop now!).

Norb Garrett
Editor

Sport

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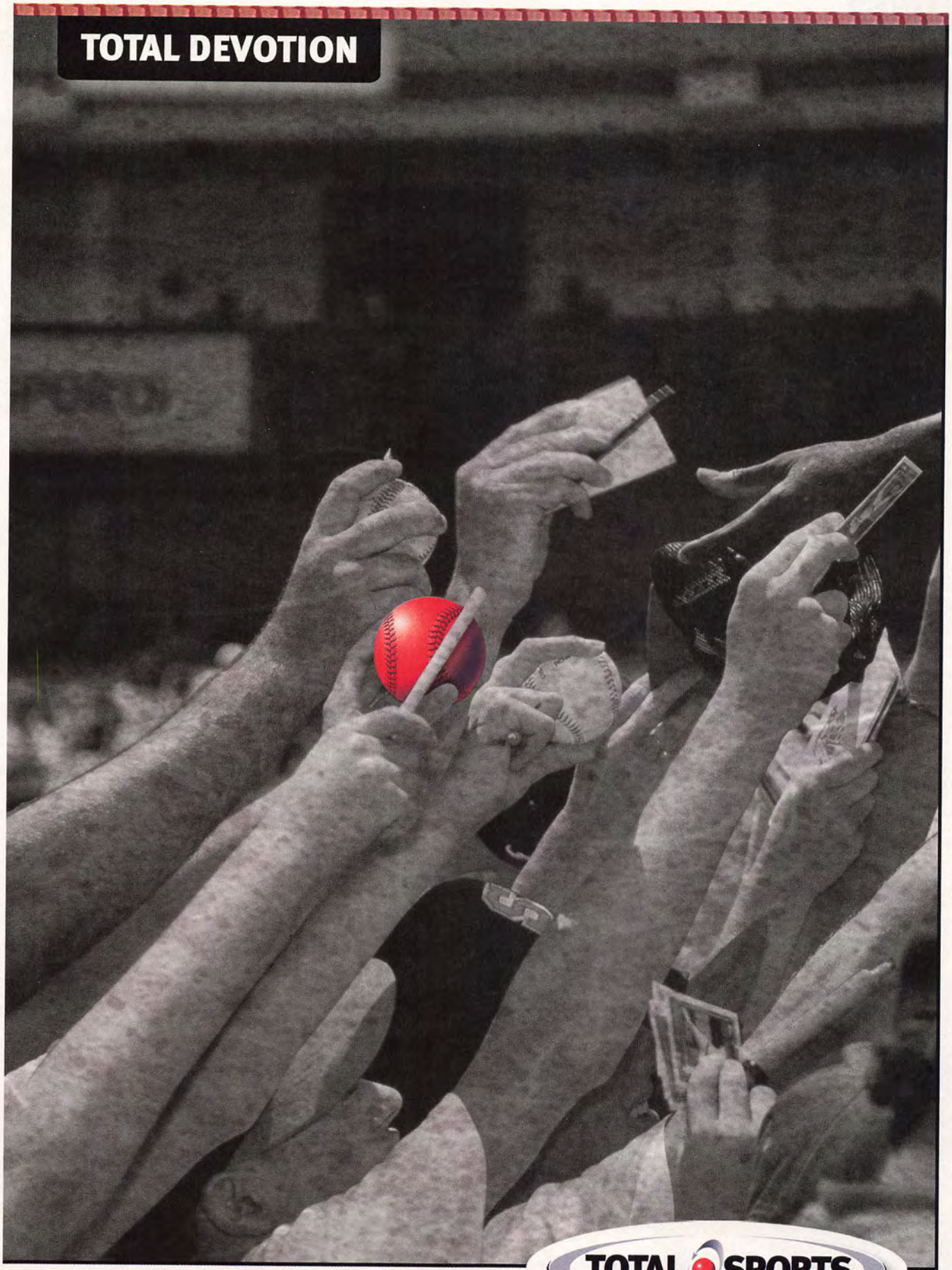

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letters

PLAYING HARD BALL

Your baseball preview ("The Magnificent 7," April) really had me wondering: Who came up with your player rankings? Where is Brad Radke of the Minnesota Twins? I thought maybe you were snubbing the Twins. But I see Eric Milton was listed at No. 18. Radke is one of the better starting pitchers in the game today.

Tom Lind
Bayport, Minn.

It's hard for me to believe that the Astros will be the No. 3 team in the majors this season. The Astros dealt away the NL's winningest pitcher last year, their starting center fielder and their right fielder. The Astros' rotation is weak, and their lineup is not as strong as it once was. With the addition of Ken Griffey, Jr., the Reds have solidified their presence at the top of the division.

John Krizel
Baldwin, N.Y.

CHOP JOB

Comparing Mike Piazza and Pudge Rodriguez is like comparing apples and oranges. Piazza is a great hitter and an average (at best) catcher. He just does not have the arm strength or feet to be a top-notch catcher. Pudge is by far the best all-around catcher in the league. He puts up good offensive numbers and rules the bases.

Rob Smith
Green Island, N.Y.

THE ANSWER IS CLEAR

It was pleasing to read an article about Allen Iverson ("You Don't Know the Answer," April) that took a legitimate and unbiased look at him. I find it admirable to see someone who is his own person and maintains that amount of self-confidence. I can't understand how we can discredit someone for being themselves. Just because all NBA players aren't how we picture them to be doesn't mean that they are any worse of a person.

Jeff Vandersnick
Creighton, Neb.

I have never been a fan of Allen, nor did I feel I ever would be. After reading your article, I feel that I might have misjudged him. Maybe I should just try and understand him like others who are close to him. I hope that he grows up soon and realizes what he has. Who knows, maybe Allen and Coach Brown will "bake that championship cake."

Lou Gizara
Amsterdam, N.Y.

WINNERS AND LOSERS

Thank you very much for picking Steve Yzerman as one of your winners. He will go down in sports history as the one of the best captains ever. He won't go to the Hockey Hall of Fame because he can score goals, he'll be there because of his heart.

Paul Marshall
Brunswick, Maine

I wanted to stand and applaud Brandon Gruner's song about

Monica Seles. If I might "one-up" Mr. Gruner, I could present "Mac: The Musical," a two-act musical I wrote chronicling Shannon MacMillan's rise from youth soccer, her fight against overwhelming personal tragedy, to her place on the National Team.

Abner Senires
E-mail

Abner, please don't.—Ed.

The athlete I love to watch is Air Vince Carter. This guy can fly and dominate opponents like the guy who retired two seasons ago, I forget his name.

Mario Johnson
E-Mail

You're thinking of Harold Miner, no?—Ed.

NOW YOU'RE THINKING

I enjoyed the Editor's Note on possible changes for sports improvement (April). Here are some of my suggestions: 1) Points in the paint only count for one; 2) Super Bowls—no turf, no domes. And every 10 years, put it in Chicago or Green Bay; 3) Ban all so-called X-games; 4) America's Cup—arm the boats; 5) Let 'em shout during golf; 6) Set a minimum number of games for winning a Gold Glove; 7) No college football polls before October.

W.A. McCormick
Federal Way, Wash.

WEEK LINK

After reading everything else inside, I finally brought myself to read "A Week Without Sports" (April). Right from the very beginning, I felt my life "juxtaposed" against Mr. Scott's! I, too, am a sports addict. Sir, you have much more resolve than I could ever muster, and I hope there were no lingering side effects! One thing though: I would have taken it one step farther and gone for the pedicure.

John Saracino
Nashville, Tenn.

HAIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

I enjoyed your article about the 11 Worst Haircuts ("Out of Bounds," April) but found the No. 1 suspect missing. What about Dennis Rodman? Have his chop jobs become mainstream or just old news?

Robert Smith
Rome, N.Y.

Old news.—Ed.

HAT TRICK

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Um, if you want a hat, make sure to, like, include your address.

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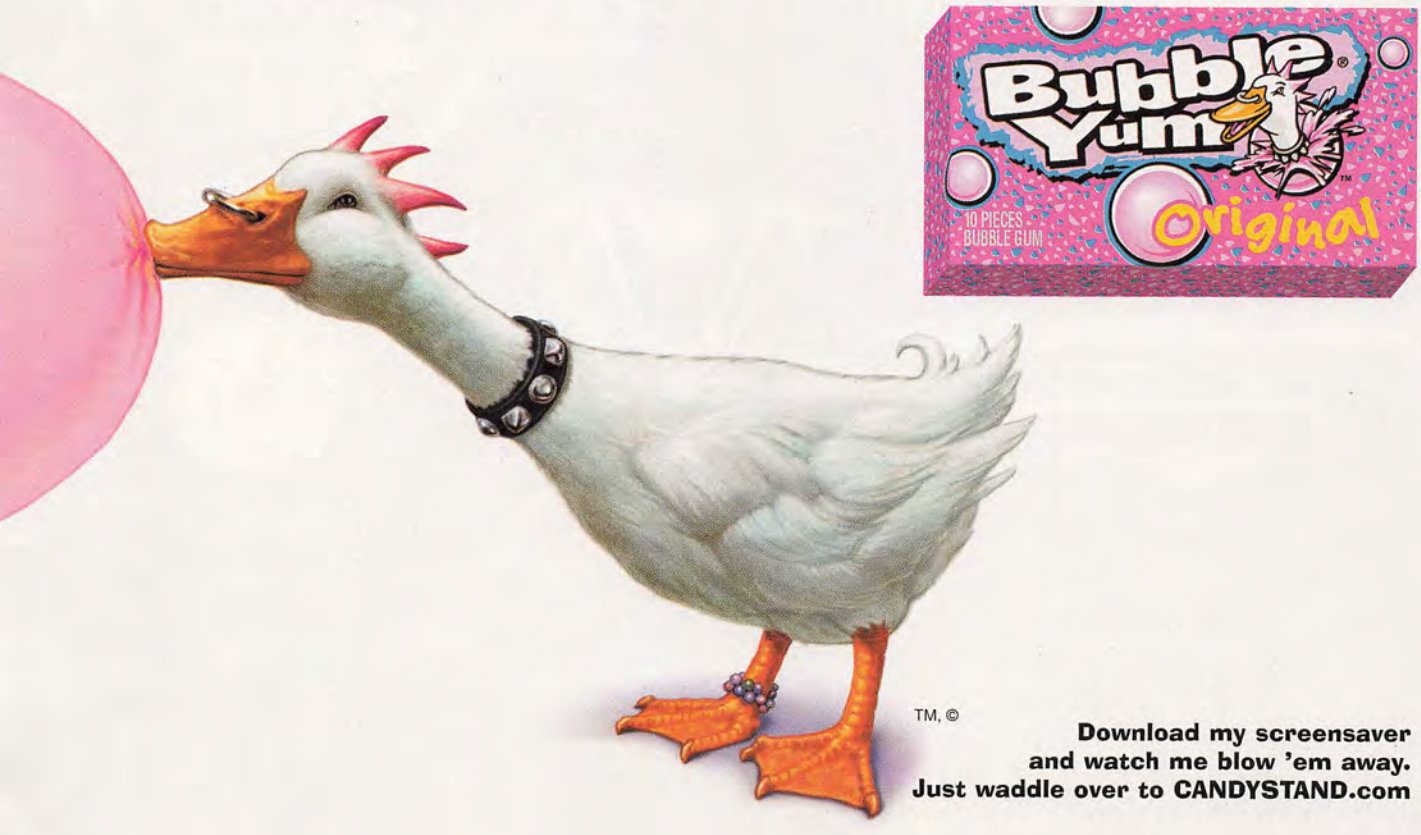

TM, ©

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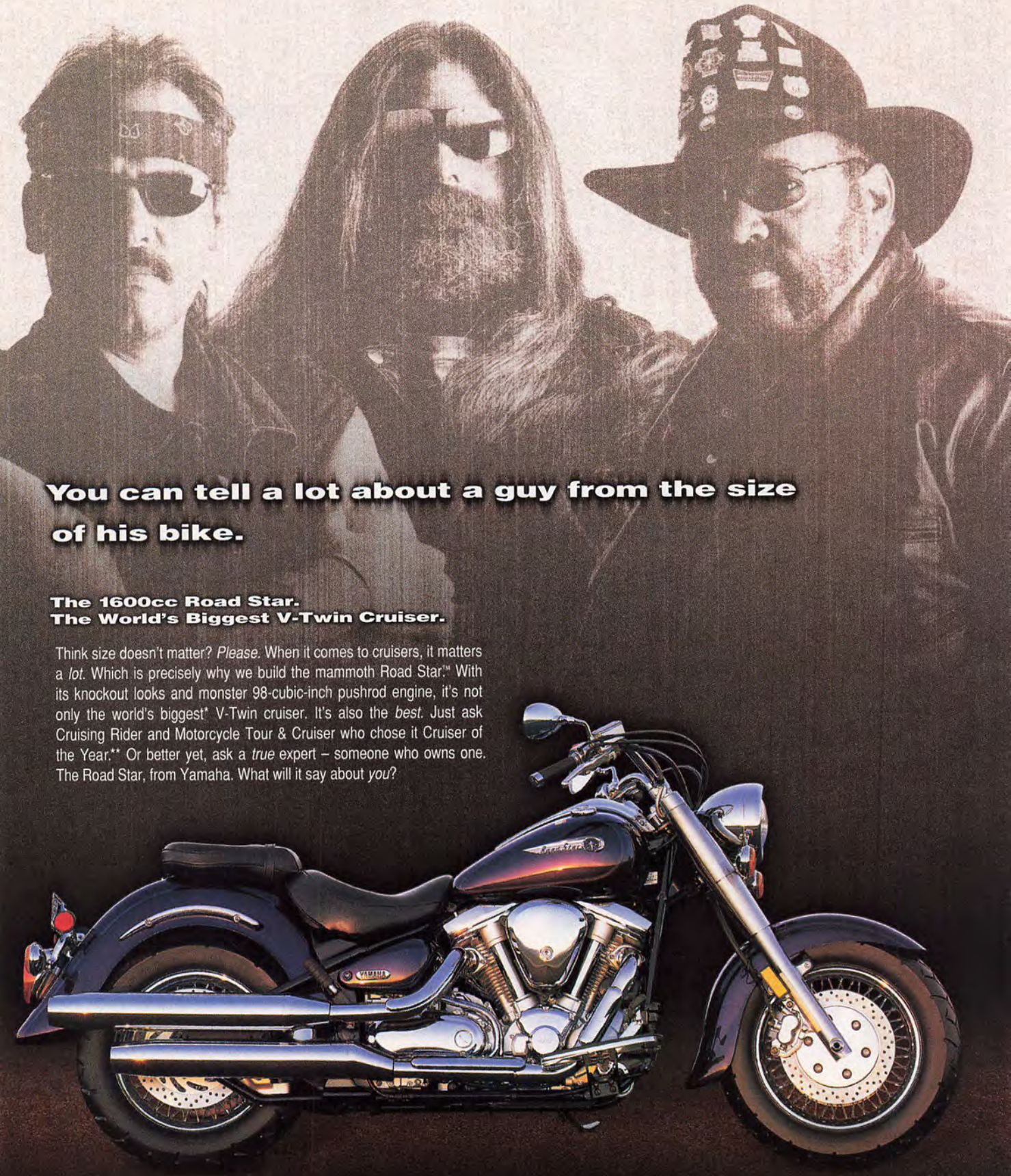

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Special thanks to Yamaha owners and STAR members (left to right): Antonio Renzi, Don Griffin & Ricardo Foreman.

*Includes major OE manufacturers of volume-produced complete motorcycles. **Spring & June 1999 respectively.

Dress properly for your ride with a helmet, eye protection, long-sleeved shirt, long pants, gloves and boots. Yamaha and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation encourage you to ride safely and respect the environment. For more information regarding the MSF rider course, call 1-800-446-9227. Do not drink and ride. It is illegal and dangerous. ©2000 Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A. Cypress, CA 90630.

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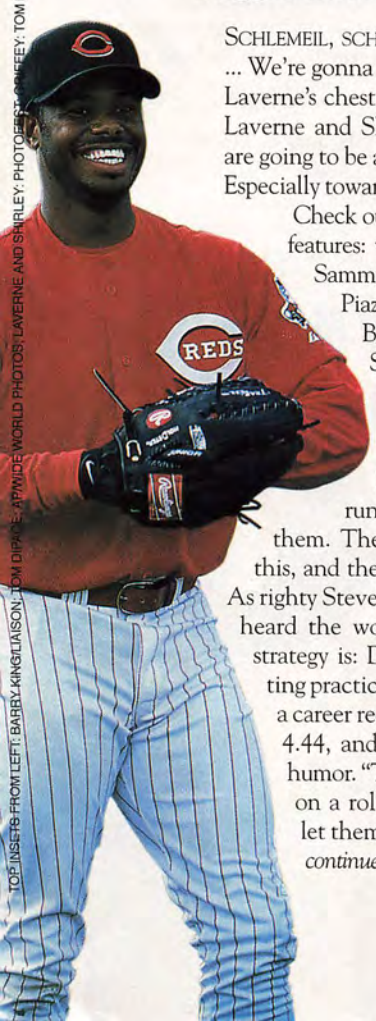
LOCKER ROOM

Not Exactly Happy Days

The Milwaukee Brewers Face A Murderers' Row of Sluggers This Summer. Here's How They'll Cope

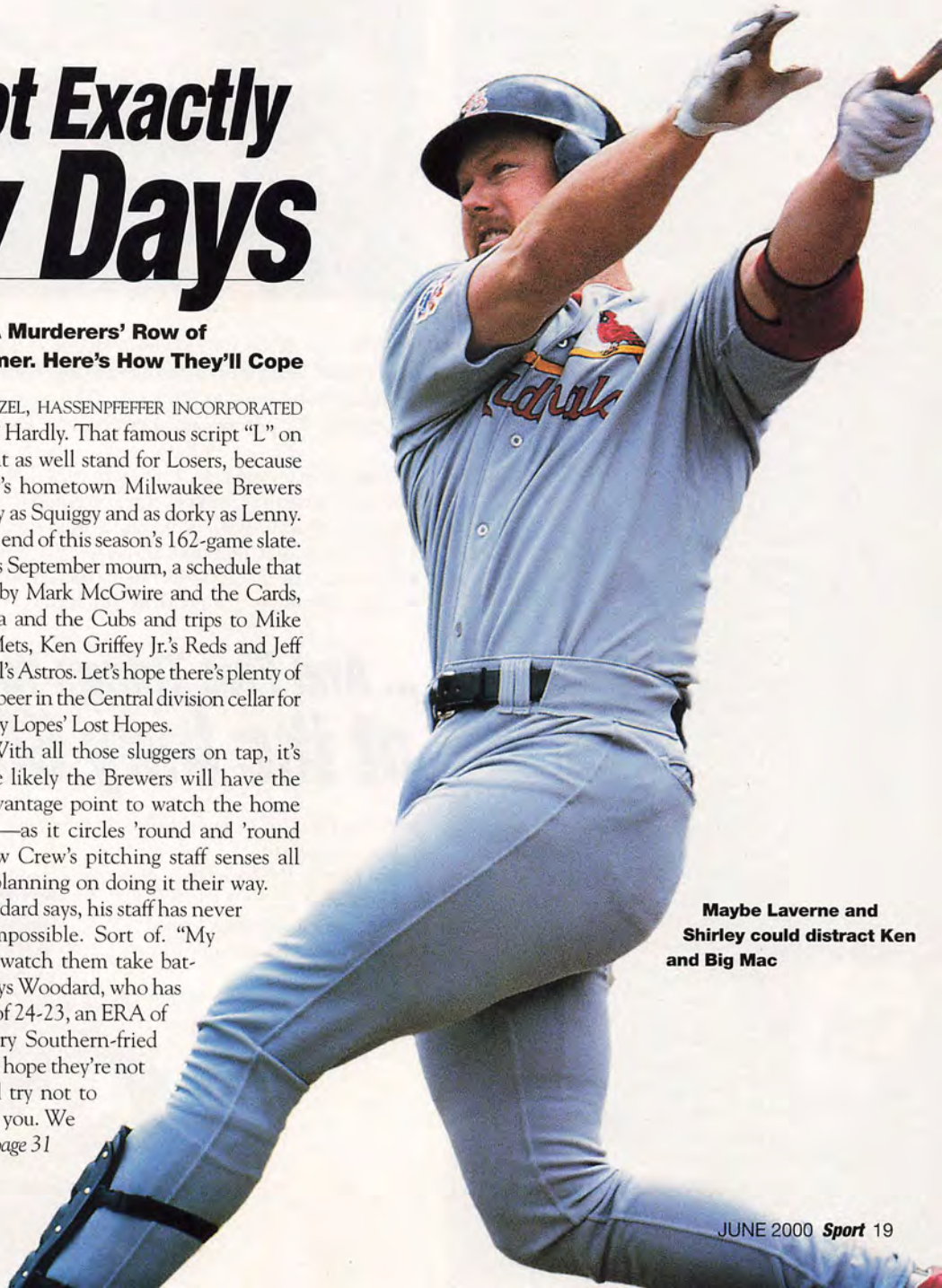


SCHLEMEIL, SCHLEMAZEL, HASSENPFEFFER INCORPORATED ... We're gonna do it? Hardly. That famous script "L" on Laverne's chest might as well stand for Losers, because Laverne and Shirley's hometown Milwaukee Brewers are going to be as ugly as Squiggy and as dorky as Lenny. Especially toward the end of this season's 162-game slate.

Check out this September mourn, a schedule that features: visits by Mark McGwire and the Cards, Sammy Sosa and the Cubs and trips to Mike Piazza's Mets, Ken Griffey Jr.'s Reds and Jeff Bagwell's Astros. Let's hope there's plenty of Shotz beer in the Central division cellar for Davey Lopes' Lost Hopes.

With all those sluggers on tap, it's quite likely the Brewers will have the best vantage point to watch the home run race—as it circles 'round and 'round them. The Brew Crew's pitching staff senses all this, and they're planning on doing it their way. As righty Steve Woodard says, his staff has never heard the word impossible. Sort of. "My strategy is: Don't watch them take batting practice," says Woodard, who has a career record of 24-23, an ERA of 4.44, and a very Southern-fried humor. "Then, hope they're not on a roll, and try not to let them beat you. We

continued on page 31



Maybe Laverne and Shirley could distract Ken and Big Mac

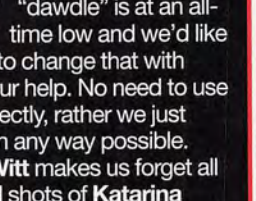
TOP INSETS FROM LEFT: BARRY KING/LIAISON; TOM DIPACE; AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS; LAVERNE AND SHIRLEY: PHOTOFEST; ONEEY: TOM DIPACE; MCGWIRE: JEFF CARLICK/ENDZONE

Pedro Martinez ----------→ Britney Spears

Send SPORT Morph ideas to sport@emapusa.com

Rant & Rave

How long till someone discovers "Who Wants Be As Rich as Regis" is fixed? .... Don't believe the hype, it's atrocious for the NBA to have **Vince Valiant** in Toronto. Atrocious .... And please, no more Vince nicknames. Oh, sorry .... Just where, may we ask, is the **NCAA** hiding all its cash? And can we get the PIN number to that account? .... Use of the word "dawdle" is at an all-time low and we'd like to change that with your help. No need to use it correctly, rather we just urge you to use it in any way possible. Thanks .... **Alicia Witt** makes us forget all about those naked shots of **Katarina Witt.** Ah, almost .... And while we're on skating, why can't people see that **Tonya Harding** is just misunderstood .... That was a joke, **Keith Olbermann,** since someone stole your sense of humor when they took away your appeal .... **Carl Everett** is going to be so monstrous for the Red Sox, they've already named a neighboring town after him. And a mountain, too. Kind of .... **Grape Ape** where have you gone my furry friend? .... **Cousin Bill** is ready to bet the house on the Redskins making it to Tampa Bay's Super Bowl, especially after the **Bruce Smith** signing. But let's remember one thing: Cousin Bill hasn't been right since his 1986 call on the Celtics. Bo the Dog had that one too .... Keep your feet in bounds and your eyes on **Benjamin Gordon** who hails from the same Mount Vernon (N.Y.) high school that delivered **Gus Williams** to the NBA.



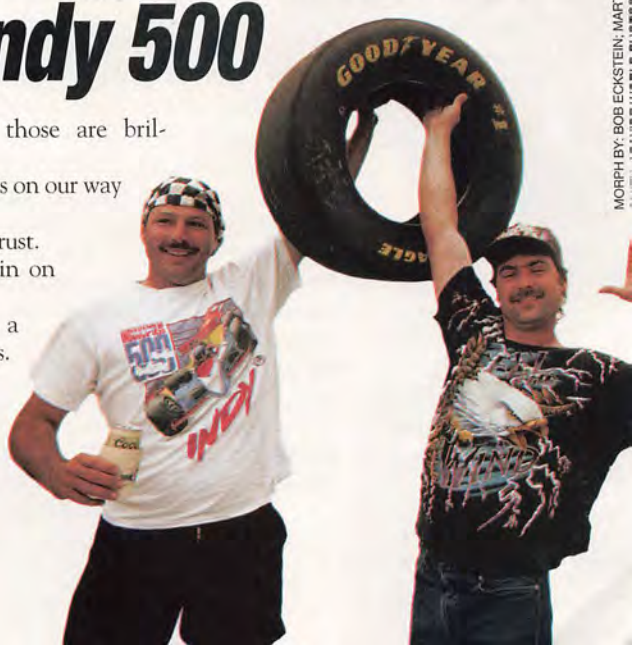
Five Things You'll Never Hear at the Kentucky Derby...

DESPITE ONE REPUTABLE STAFFER TELLING US THE INDY 500 BRINGS OUT AN UPPER crust crowd, we prefer to perpetuate the belief that cars attract car people and horses attract horse people. And never the twain shall meet. Especially at the respective tracks. We pass no judgment on who has the better lives or the better parties:

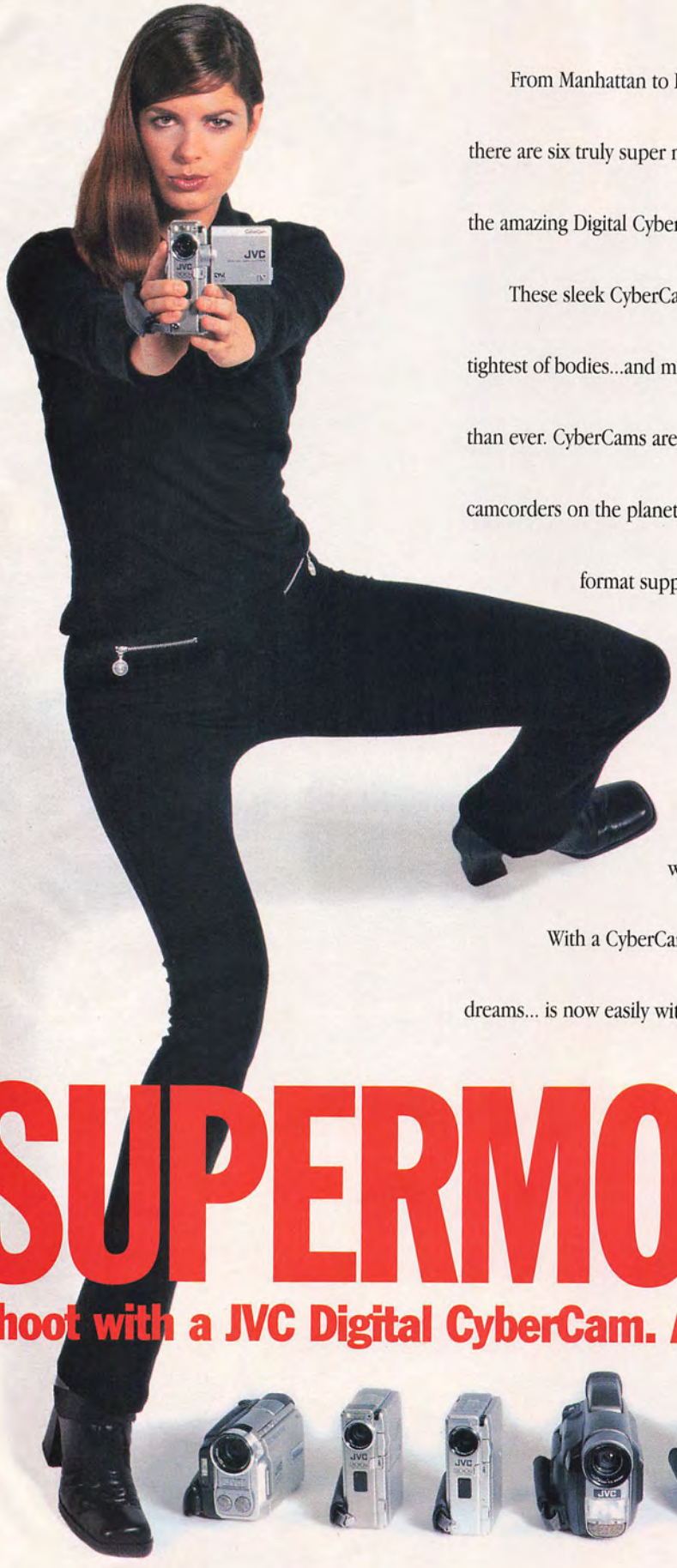
- Dang, woman, you gut all yer teeth back, huh?
- So, we threw the four kids, three dogs and the cat in the pick-up and went to dinner at Dairy Queen. With our coupons from the Sunday paper.
- Hey, lookie thar, that horse looks just like Aunt Thelma
- Was that Cheez Wiz on special or did you get it with the food stamps?
- Daggonnit. I just spat my skoal into my beer cup. Might as well drink it anyway.

... And Five Things You'll Never Hear at the Indy 500

- My goodness, Sylvia, those are brilliant diamonds.
- We were in the Mercedes on our way to the club ...
- That is Beluga caviar, I trust.
- Will Muffy be coming in on the Concorde?
- You know, it really is a lovely day for mint juleps.



MORPH BY: BOB ECKSTEIN; MARTINEZ: MILAN RYBA/GLOBE PHOTOS; SPEARS: EVAN AGOSTINI/LIAISON; WITT: BARRY KING/LIAISON;



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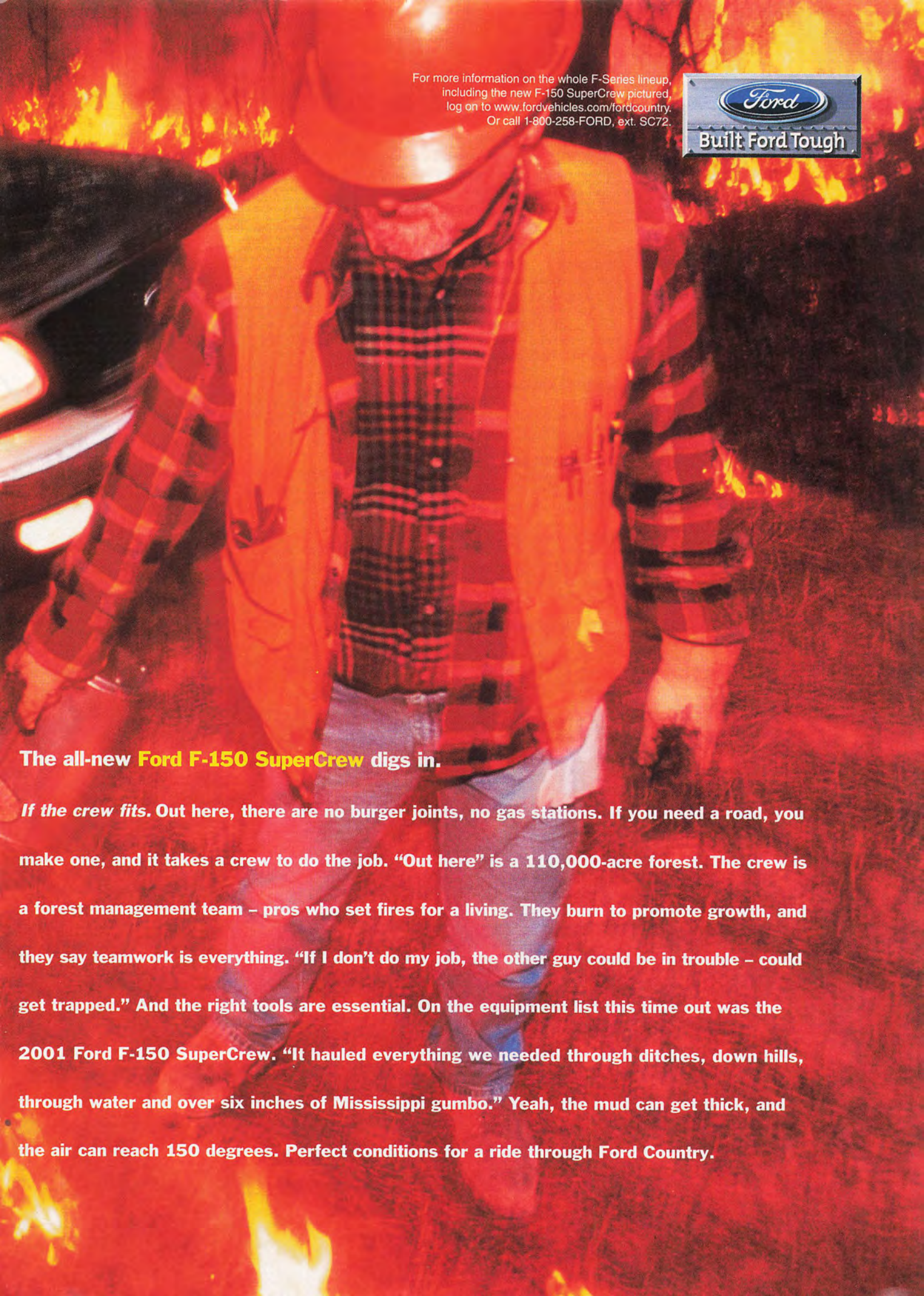
Photographer's notes: "The F-150 SuperCrew handled the tough conditions as well as it handled the crew. Chuck Bergin, THE MAN down here, said, 'All six of us fit in the cab. The clothes we wear aren't business clothes; they're heavy, thick, and we still had room. It handles smooth. And the fact that the bed extends when you need it is a plus.' Whether you're man or machine, if you're part of the crew, you do the hard work." – Raymond Gehman

Waynesboro Mississippi Ford Country December 18, 1999


For more information on the whole F-Series lineup,
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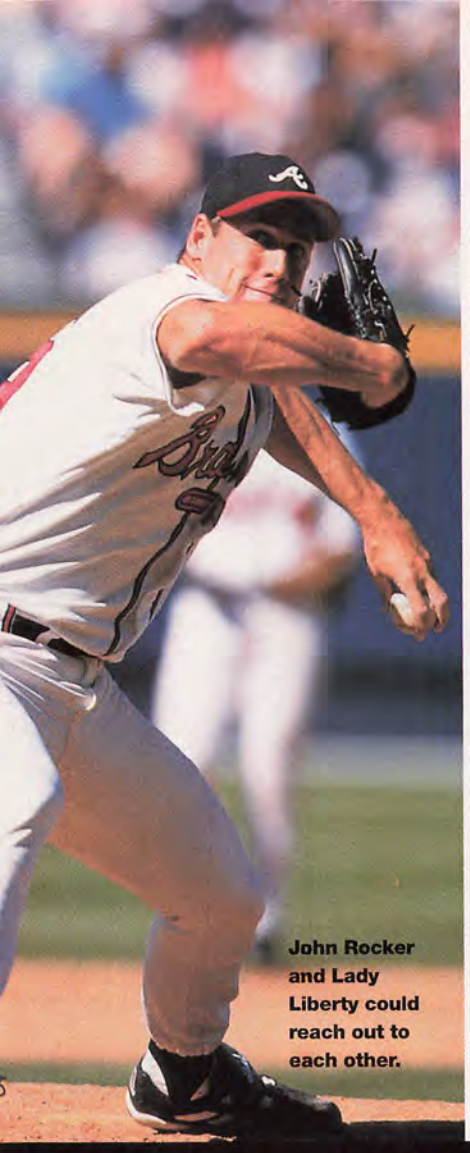
Ford
Built Ford Tough
The all-new Ford F-150 SuperCrew digs in.
If the crew fits. Out here, there are no burger joints, no gas stations. If you need a road, you make one, and it takes a crew to do the job. "Out here" is a 110,000-acre forest. The crew is a forest management team – pros who set fires for a living. They burn to promote growth, and they say teamwork is everything. "If I don't do my job, the other guy could be in trouble – could get trapped." And the right tools are essential. On the equipment list this time out was the 2001 Ford F-150 SuperCrew. "It hauled everything we needed through ditches, down hills, through water and over six inches of Mississippi gumbo." Yeah, the mud can get thick, and the air can reach 150 degrees. Perfect conditions for a ride through Ford Country.



John Rocker and Lady Liberty could reach out to each other.

The Cradle Will Rocker

ON JUNE 29TH, THE ATLANTA BRAVES STORM INTO SHEA STADIUM FOR A FOUR-GAME SERIES WITH the Mets. Over that weekend, there's a good chance that John Rocker will make his first mound appearance in New York City since his infamous tirade—which, considering his trashing of the city's citizens, might not be all that enjoyable for him. So, altruistic souls that we are, we've compiled a list of fun places for the Rockhead to visit during his sojourn. After all, we wouldn't want him riding around aimlessly on the 7 train all by himself, late at night, with all those ... strangers.

SYLVIA'S
Acknowledged as one of the nation's premiere soul food eateries, this legendary Harlem haunt would be a superb place for Rocker to dine if he feels a hankerin' for some authentic Southern cuisine. And for those who say that Big John would be a fool to show his face in Harlem, we say a few batteries to the noggin is worth a plate of Sylvia's gravy-smothered chicken any day.

HARD ROCK CAFE
A marvelous place for the Macon Madman to avoid the angry natives, as no self-respecting New Yorker would dare set foot in this internationally-renown-but-locally-reviled theme restaurant.

THE BRONX ZOO
This lovely animal gallery boasts one of the most respected primate collections on the Eastern seaboard, a fact that should impress a noted "fat monkey" aficionado such as Rocker.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
When he needs some quiet time away from the masses, this opulent edifice will serve as a perfect place for Rocker to lodge—especially since no New Yorker would consider looking for him there. What, you mean's he's *not* illiterate?

STATEN ISLAND FERRY
It's free, it offers spectacular views of New York Harbor, the lower Manhattan skyline, and Lady Liberty, plus it's simply a wonderful way to spend ... oh, wait, scratch this ... Rocker doesn't like ferrys. —*Alan Goldsher*

SPORT ASKS

What If...

... Bill Walton Were on "The Waltons"

Would the Waltons fit in the locker room?

- The good nights would now include: Good night Mary Ellen, good night Jim Bob, good night John Boy, good night Big Red ... and turn down that Dead bootleg.
- John Boy would be played by NBC partner Bob Costas. Or maybe Costas could do Grandma Esther.
- Luke Walton would have become a wrangler instead of a Wildcat.
- The role of Grandpa Zeb would be played by John Wooden. If it wasn't already.
- The Walton's Mountain Museum in Schuyler, Va., would have a dirt basketball court and a set of drums for Bill to bang on.
- The next TV special would be "Return to Walton's Mountain: A Slam Dunk Walton Christmas."

Would Bill fit on the porch?

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TOM PIDGE; BOB TORREZ/LIAISON; PHOTOFEST; ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN/NBA PHOTOS

The All-New
FORD F-150
SUPERCREW

The All-New
FORD F-150
SUPERCREW

The All-New
FORD F-150
SUPERCREW

The All-New
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SUPERCREW

The all-new Ford F-150 SuperCrew

It's the only full-size truck in its class with four full-size doors, which gives you the most convenient entry/exit of any truck in its class.

F-150 SuperCrew also features:

- The most spacious rear seat of any pickup in its class
- Room for six
- 60/40 rear split bench with fold-flat storage feature
- 40/60 front split bench with recliners, armrest and driver's side lumbar support
- Rear seat auxiliary powerpoint
- 6-disc CD changer

Ford Built Ford Tough

The All-New FORD F-150 SUPERCREW Ford Country

The all-new Ford F-150 SuperCrew

Equipped with an optional Bed Extender, this class-exclusive stainless steel cage flips out onto the tailgate to provide a seven-foot cargo bed.

F-150 SuperCrew also features:

- Class-exclusive standard power adjustable accelerator and brake pedals
- Available 4-wheel ABS and 4-wheel disc brakes
- SecuriLock™ Passive Anti-Theft System
- Overhead console
- Available power moonroof

Ford Built Ford Tough

The All-New FORD F-150 SUPERCREW Ford Country

The all-new Ford F-150 SuperCrew

Its optional 5.4L Triton™ V8 generates 350 lbs.-ft. at 2,500 rpm, offering the most torque in its class.

F-150 SuperCrew also features:

- 260 horsepower at 4,500 rpm
- Standard electronic shift-on-the-fly (4x4)
- Maximum GVWR: 6,750 lbs.
- Maximum trailer weight: 8,000 lbs.
- Maximum payload: 1,900 lbs.
- 16" polished aluminum wheels

Ford Built Ford Tough

The All-New FORD F-150 SUPERCREW Ford Country

The all-new Ford F-150 SuperCrew

For more information on the HOT, all-new Ford F-150 SuperCrew or to receive a SuperCrew product specification catalog, call 1-800-258-FORD ext. SC72 or log on to www.fordvehicles.com.

Beth Szabo, Forest Management Team Supervisor: "Driving a four-door pickup is the greatest thing ever. It has all the advantages of an open bed, plus all kinds of interior room. And with that full back seat, your knees aren't touching your chin – that makes a big difference."

Ford Built Ford Tough

The All-New FORD F-150 SUPERCREW Ford Country

What's Up Down Under?

WHAT DO SUSPECT STAINS, BEER, SHEEP and Nicole Kidman have in common? No it's not a new scandal courtesy of Washington, D.C., but rather Sydney, Australia, the host of the 2000 Olympics. SPORT sat down with Greg Maddock, general manager of Sydney, to find out the real scoop about life Down Under and to investigate this interesting conundrum. —*Brandon Gruner*

SPORT: What happened with the Olympic flag from Atlanta?
Maddock: The flag was handed over from Atlanta to Juan Antonio Samaranch to the Lord Mayor, who brought the flag home. But there was a stain on the flag when they brought it home to Sydney. It's one of the great mysteries of life.
SPORT: Oh, really.
Maddock: Yeah, there was a big stain on it.
SPORT: Was it a beer stain?
Maddock: There were a number of rumors. Turn the recorder off and it will be much more fun.
SPORT: Don't worry. Unfortunately, we understand.

SPORT: Is Foster's really Australian for beer?
Maddock: Yeah. Another brand is XXXX. Have you heard that joke? There is this brand called XXXX, a Queensland beer, and that's because Australians call it spit! So, I drink either XXXX or Foster's.
SPORT: Have you ever been drinking in Bondi Junction?
Maddock: Yeah, the only problem with Bondi is all the Kiwis—all the New Zealanders come to Bondi, so you have to tell sheep jokes. You ever explain sheep jokes to New Zealanders? There are more sheep than there are people in New Zealand, so Kiwis are very close to their sheep. Australians are always telling sheep jokes.
SPORT: And we know that there are a lot of good sheep jokes ...
Maddock: "I was just helping the sheep out of the fence, your honor."

SPORT: Is it true they're dropping the Miss Australia competition?

They can keep "Crocodile Dundee," we'll take Nicole.

Maddock: Yes, it's moving out of the country. Things change.
SPORT: It couldn't be worse timing. Who's going to ride in the front of the parade float for the Olympics?
Maddock: I'm going to say Nicole Kidman. That's a silly question.
SPORT: Is Nicole Kidman from Sydney?
Maddock: Yeah, born and bred.
SPORT: Any more Nicole Kidmans you can send us?
Maddock: You like her?
SPORT: Just a bit. Is that your best export?
Maddock: Women? Pretty good, eh!

ARNALDO MAGNANI/LIAISON

INTRODUCING THE ALL-NEW FORD F-150 SUPERCREW.

- 6-PASSENGER SEATING
- Four full-size doors
- Best-in-class torque*
- Most rear seat room in its class
- Available Bed Extender to 7 feet

Built Ford Tough

*Properly equipped.

Me, Myself & Irene Instant Win Game Official Rules

1. No Purchase Necessary. Open to legal U.S. residents residing in the 50 United States and District of Columbia. Employees of ©Nabisco, Inc. and Twentieth Century Fox, their parent companies, their affiliates, subsidiaries, sales representatives, distributors, retailers, advertising and promotion agencies, printers of game materials and members of the immediate families (spouse and parents, children and siblings and their spouses) and/or household members of each of the above are ineligible. Void in Puerto Rico and where prohibited. Subject to all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

2. To Participate: Game pieces available at participating retailers in specially marked 1.7 Oz., 4 Oz. and 7 Oz. bags of Cornnuts. Game begins on May 1, 2000 and ends on September 30, 2000, by which date prize claims must be received. **For Free Game Piece, While Supplies Last, and Complete Official Rules:** Mail hand printed, self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) to Me, Myself & Irene Game, P.O. Box 8419, Dept. CN, Prospect Heights, IL 60070 postmarked by August 21, 2000 for receipt by August 31, 2000. WA and VT residents may omit return postage. Limit one game piece per request; one request per envelope. No mechanical reproductions or photocopies of requests allowed.

3. To Play: Open bag and find one complete game piece printed inside. (Incomplete game pieces are invalid.) Or submit a mail-in request for a game piece. If game piece inside bag or received in response to a mail-in request reveals the name of a prize, you win the prize indicated, subject to verification. Non-winning game pieces carry a "Sorry" message.

4. Prizes/Approximate Retail Value (ARV)/Odds of Winning: 1 Grand Prize: $25,000 (ARV: $25,000/Odds: 1:10,990,059). 500 First Prizes: $25.00 (ARV: $25.00 each/Odds: 1:21,980). 100,000 Second Prizes: Coupon for Free 1.7 Oz. Cornnuts Product (ARV: $0.60 each/Odds: 1:109). A total of 100,501 prizes with a total ARV of $97,500 are available to be awarded based on a distribution of 10,990,059 game pieces. Overall odds of winning a prize: 1:104.

5. Prize Restrictions: No substitutions or cash equivalents of prizes as offered except by Sponsor who reserves the right to substitute prizes with a prize of equal or greater value should featured prize become unavailable. Prizes are not transferable. Taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of winners. If winner is a minor, prize may be awarded in minor's name to a parent or legal guardian who must sign all required documents.

6. How To Claim Prizes: All prize claims are subject to verification and compliance with Official Rules by Promotion Activators, Inc., an independent judging organization whose decisions are final in all matters relating to this game promotion. Grand and First Prize Only: Cut out complete, original game piece and sign full legal signature in ink across back of game piece (or, if a minor, also include parent/legal guardian signature). Hand print your name, address, city, state, zip code and daytime telephone number on a 3" x 5" card. Mail original game piece and 3" x 5" card to Me, Myself & Irene Game, P.O. Box 8567, Prospect Heights, IL 60070 for receipt by September 30, 2000. Send Grand Prize Claim via certified mail, return receipt requested and First Prize Claims via either certified mail, return receipt requested or first class mail. Make and retain a photocopy of the signed game piece before mailing. Second Prize: Redeem at participating stores offering Cornnuts products. Coupons must be redeemed strictly in accordance with terms and conditions of use prior to expiration date of June 30, 2001. Store personnel are not authorized to verify/redeem winning game pieces except free product coupon prize, which must be redeemed at a participating retailer. Unclaimed or forfeited prizes will not be awarded.

7. Conditions of Participation: By playing game, participants (and, if minors, their parents/legal guardians) agree to abide by and be bound by the Official Rules and the decisions of the judges. By accepting prizes, winners (and, if minors, their parents/legal guardians) agree a.) to the use of their names and/or likenesses for advertising and publicity purposes in any and all media worldwide without limitation and without additional compensation, except where prohibited; b.) to release and hold harmless Nabisco, Inc. and Twentieth Century Fox, their parent companies, their affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies, including, but not limited to, Davidson Marketing, Inc., prize suppliers, judging organization and all their respective officers, directors, employees, representatives and agents from all liability and claims arising from or in connection with the acceptance, use or misuse of any prizes received in this game or participation in any prize related activities or participation in this game; and c.) to waive the right to assert as a cost of winning prize, any and all costs of redemption or travel to redeem said prize and any liability which might arise from redeeming or seeking to redeem said prize.

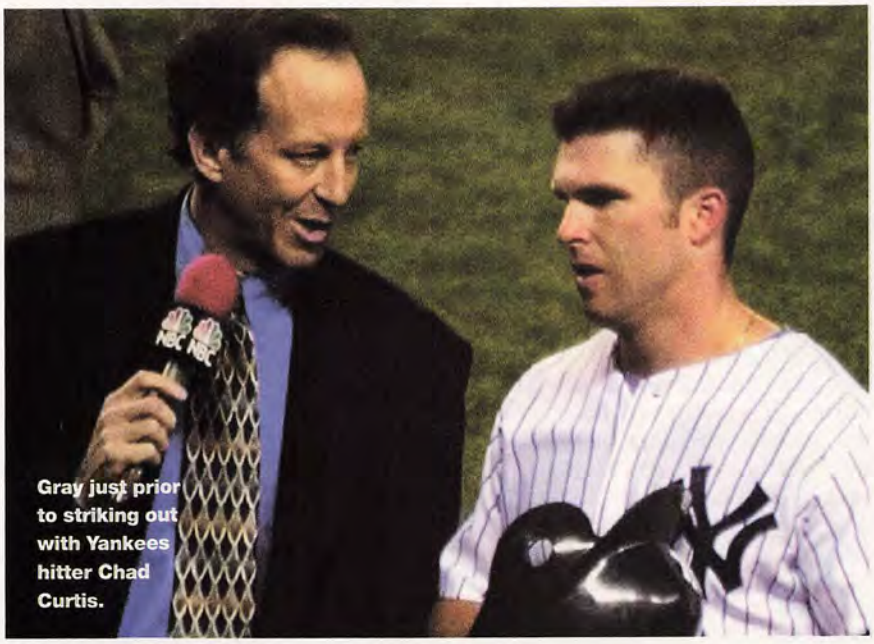
Sponsor or its agencies are not responsible for lost, late, incomplete, damaged, illegible, misdirected, stolen or postage-due claims, requests or mail. Grand and First Prize Winners will be notified by mail. Grand Prize winner (and, if a minor, winner's parent/legal guardian) must execute an Affidavit of Eligibility and Liability/Publicity Release (where permitted) which must be signed, notarized and returned within a specified time or prize will be forfeited.

8. Additional Terms: Game pieces submitted for prize claims become the property of Sponsor and will not be returned. Game pieces are void if not obtained from authorized, legitimate channels, or if they are in whole or in part illegible, incomplete, damaged, irregular, altered, mutilated, counterfeit, tampered with in any way, forged or obtained through fraud or theft or if they contain printing, production, typographical, mechanical or other errors. Liability for game pieces containing printing or other errors will be limited to the provision of another game piece, while supplies last. In the event production, seeding, printing or other errors cause more than the stated number of prizes of any category to be available and/or claimed, Sponsor will award the stated number of prizes in any such category by random drawing among all eligible claimants in such prize category. By entering, participants agree that under no circumstances will the Sponsor or its agencies award a greater number of prizes than provided in Rule #4 above.

Winners List: For the name of the Grand Prize winner, send a SASE to Me, Myself & Irene Game Winners List, P.O. Box 8419, Dept. WN, Prospect Heights, IL 60070 for receipt by September 30, 2000. Sponsor: Nabisco, Inc., 7 Sylvan Way, Parsippany, New Jersey 07054-0304, ©2000 Nabisco, Inc. TM & ©2000 Twentieth Century Fox. All Rights Reserved.

Top 10 People

We'd Like Jim Gray to Interview Next



Gray just prior to striking out with Yankees hitter Chad Curtis.

No matter how you feel he handled the Pete Rose interview last October, you've got to admit Jim Gray has a knack for the spotlight.

Lawrence Taylor: LT meet JG, perhaps you can settle things in the Toughman ring

Pete Rose, Jr.: "Petey, why does your daddy hate me?"

Dr. Jack Kevorkian: "Doctor, are you willing to admit that you're a homicidal killer?"

Albert Belle: The Belle would toll for thee, Jim

Bob Knight: Preferably when Knight's at his finest, that is, after a first-round Tournament loss

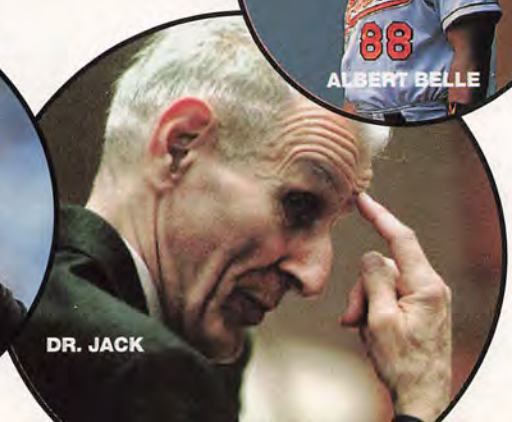
Dennis Rodman: We figure if anyone can get Dennis to stay in one place for any length of time, it's Gray. Maybe.

Barbara Walters: Two people who can't take "no" for an answer

Jim Rome: Texas Death Match; Rome falls, Gray skies in approval ratings

Mike Ditka: Think Gray would wear dreads for the interview?

Anna Kournikova: Anything to get more Anna Airtime



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS; TOM DIPACE; AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS; TOM DIPACE

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Me, Myself & Irene

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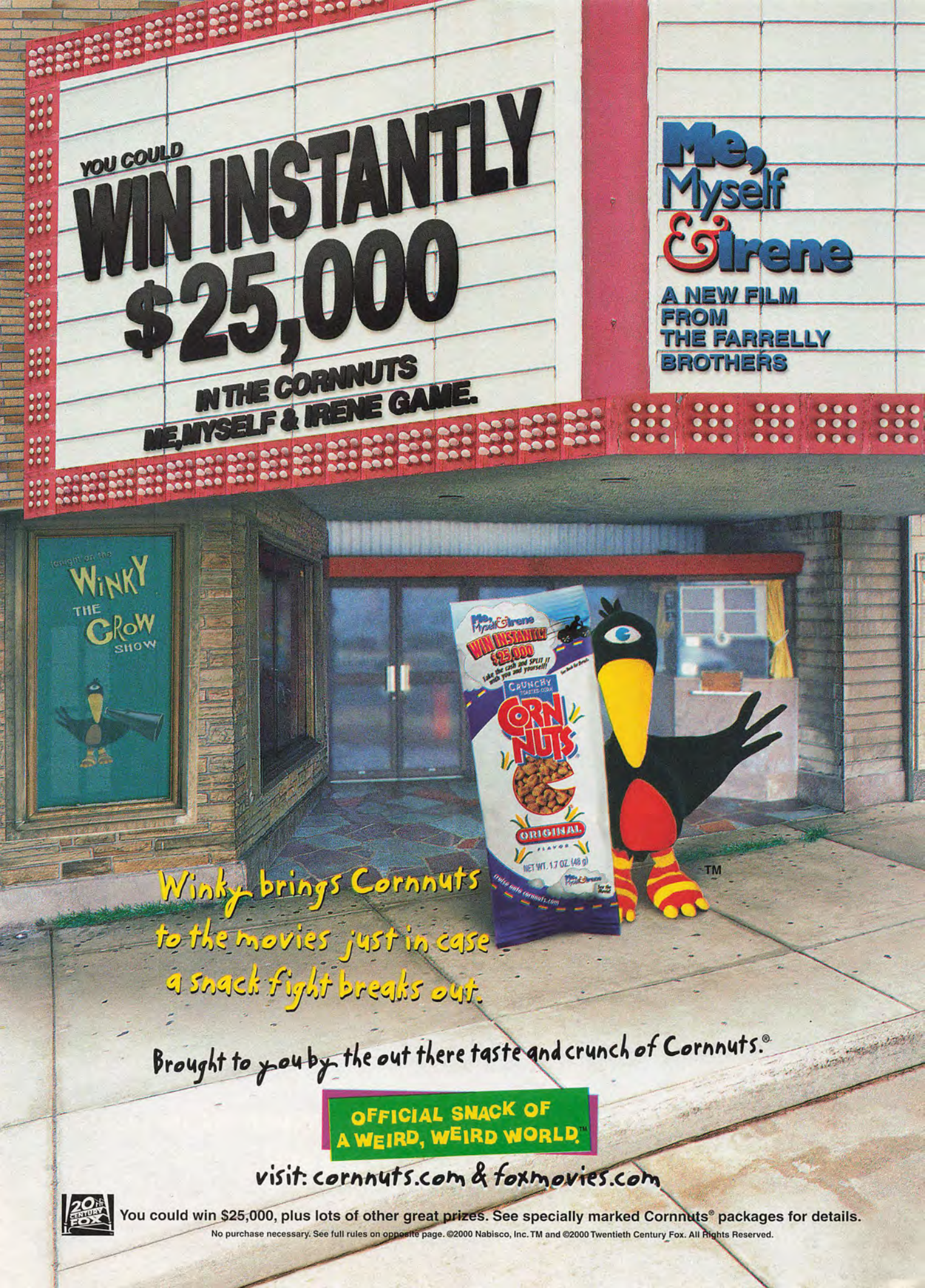

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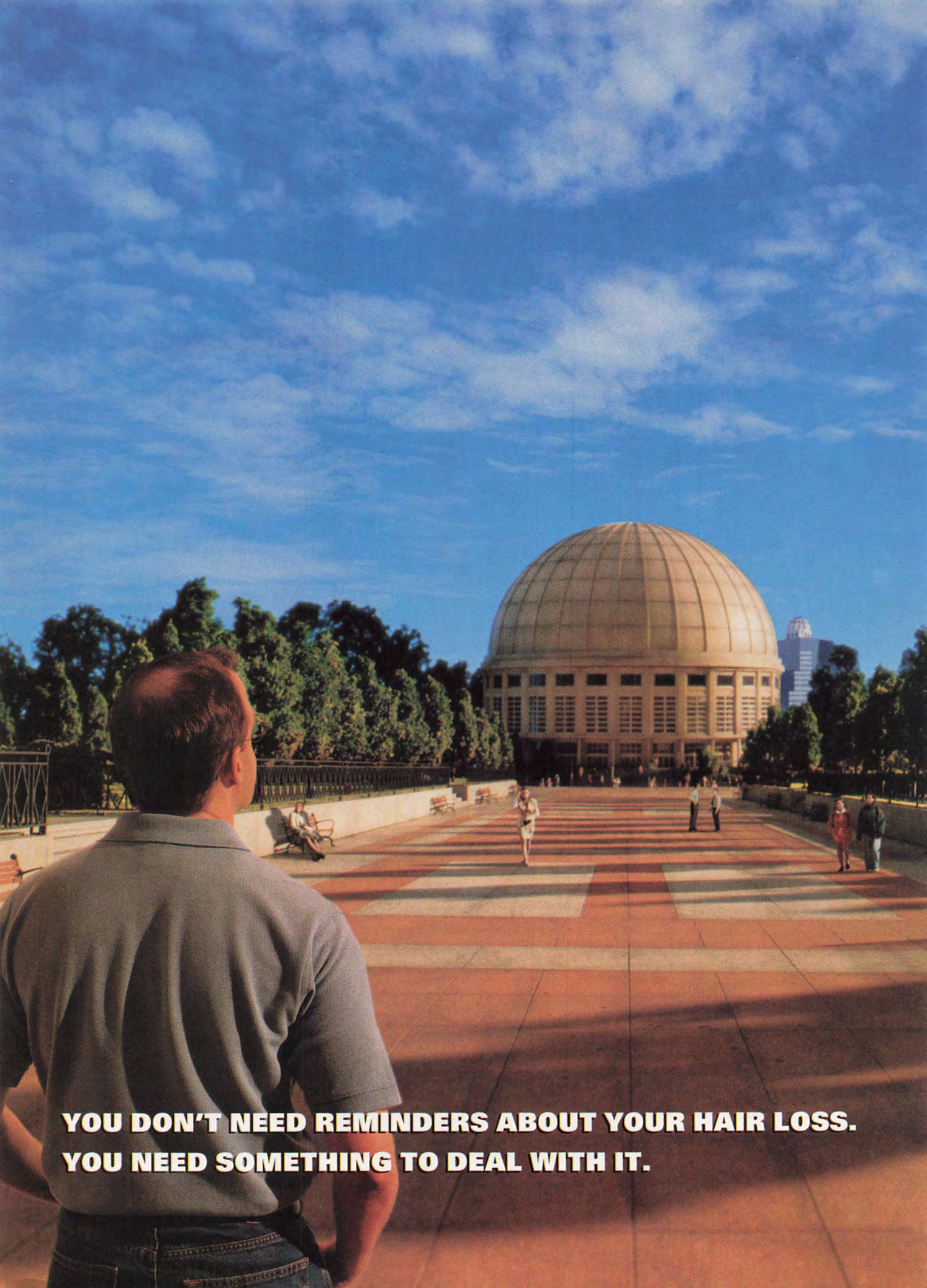
YOU DON'T NEED REMINDERS ABOUT YOUR HAIR LOSS.
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PROPECIA is the first and only FDA-approved pill proven to treat male pattern hair loss on the vertex (top of the head) and anterior mid-scalp area in men.

THE NUMBERS

The fact is, for most men, PROPECIA works. The results of 2 years of testing speak for themselves.*

- 5 out of 6 men kept the amount of hair they had (vs. 28% with a sugar pill).
- 2 out of 3 men grew back some of their lost hair (vs. 7% with a sugar pill).

Most men reported an increase in the amount of hair, a decrease in hair loss, and improvement in appearance. And the vast majority of men on PROPECIA were rated by doctors as improved (80% vs. 47% with a sugar pill).

*Based on vertex studies at 2 years of men 18 to 41 with mild to moderate hair loss. There is not evidence that PROPECIA works for receding hairlines at the temples.

THE MOST COMMON SIDE EFFECTS

Clinical tests showed PROPECIA was very well tolerated. Only a very small number of men had some sexual side effects, with each occurring in less than 2% of men. They included less desire for sex, difficulty in achieving an erection, and a decrease in the amount of semen. When the men who had these side effects stopped taking PROPECIA, the side effects went away.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW

PROPECIA is for men only. Women who are or may potentially be pregnant must not use PROPECIA because of the risk that the active ingredient may cause a specific kind of birth defect. (See accompanying Patient Product Information for details.) Likewise, they should avoid handling the tablets when they're crushed or broken. PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling.

WHEN YOU COULD SEE RESULTS

Take PROPECIA daily and you could see results in as little as 3 months. If you stop taking it, however, your results will gradually go away over 12 months. And if it hasn't worked in 12 months, it is unlikely to be of benefit.

For more information, call **1-888-535-5575** or just click onto our website at **www.propecia.com.** PROPECIA is available by prescription only, so the best thing to do is talk to your doctor.

Know the facts. Many men do, which is probably why over 30,000 prescriptions for PROPECIA are filled each week.** Please read the next page for additional information about PROPECIA.

**Weekly prescription data, 01/08/99 – 01/21/00, from IMS Health National Prescription Audit *Plus* 7.™

Propecia®
(finasteride)
Helping make hair loss history®

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Propecia®* (Finasteride) Tablets

Patient Information about PROPECIA®

(Pro-pee-sha)

Generic name: finasteride
(fin-AS-tur-eyed)

PROPECIA is for use by MEN ONLY.**

Please read this leaflet before you start taking PROPECIA. Also, read the information included with PROPECIA each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss PROPECIA when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups.

What is PROPECIA used for?

PROPECIA is used for the treatment of male pattern hair loss on the vertex and the anterior mid-scalp area.

PROPECIA is for use by **MEN ONLY** and should **NOT** be used by women or children.

What is male pattern hair loss?

Male pattern hair loss is a common condition in which men experience thinning of the hair on the scalp. Often, this results in a receding hairline and/or balding on the top of the head. These changes typically begin gradually in men in their 20s.

Doctors believe male pattern hair loss is due to heredity and is dependent on hormonal effects. Doctors refer to this type of hair loss as androgenetic alopecia.

Results of clinical studies:

For 12 months, doctors studied over 1800 men aged 18 to 41 with mild to moderate amounts of ongoing hair loss. All men, whether receiving PROPECIA or placebo (a pill containing no medication) were given a medicated shampoo (Neutrogena T/Gel®*** Shampoo). Of these men, approximately 1200 with hair loss at the top of the head were studied for an additional 12 months. In general, men who took PROPECIA maintained or increased the number of visible scalp hairs and noticed improvement in their hair in the first year, with the effect maintained in the second year. Hair counts in men who did not take PROPECIA continued to decrease.

In one study, patients were questioned on the growth of body hair. PROPECIA did not appear to affect hair in places other than the scalp.

Will PROPECIA work for me?

For most men, PROPECIA increases the number of scalp hairs, helping to fill in thin or balding areas of the scalp. Men taking PROPECIA noted a slowing of hair loss during two years of use. Although results will vary, generally you will not be able to grow back all of the hair you have lost. There is not sufficient evidence that PROPECIA works in the treatment of receding hairline in the temporal area on both sides of the head.

Male pattern hair loss occurs gradually over time. On average, healthy hair grows only about half an inch each month. Therefore, it will take time to see any effect.

You may need to take PROPECIA daily for three months or more before you see a benefit from taking PROPECIA. PROPECIA can only work over the long term if you continue taking it. If the drug has not worked for you in twelve months, further treatment is unlikely to be of benefit. If you stop taking PROPECIA, you will likely lose the hair you have gained within 12 months of stopping treatment. You should discuss this with your doctor.

How should I take PROPECIA?

Follow your doctor's instructions.

- Take one tablet by mouth each day.
- You may take PROPECIA with or without food.
- If you forget to take PROPECIA, do not take an extra tablet. Just take the next tablet as usual.

PROPECIA will not work faster or better if you take it more than once a day.

Who should NOT take PROPECIA?

- PROPECIA is for the treatment of male pattern hair loss in **MEN ONLY** and should not be taken by women or children.
- Anyone allergic to any of the ingredients.

A warning about PROPECIA and pregnancy.

- **Women who are or may potentially be pregnant:**
  - **must not use PROPECIA**
  - **should not handle crushed or broken tablets of PROPECIA.**

If a woman who is pregnant with a male baby absorbs the active ingredient in PROPECIA, either by swallowing or through the skin, it may cause abnormalities of a male baby's sex organs. If a woman who is pregnant comes into contact with the active ingredient in PROPECIA, a doctor should be consulted. PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling, provided that the tablets are not broken or crushed.

What are the possible side effects of PROPECIA?

Like all prescription products, PROPECIA may cause side effects. In clinical studies, side effects from PROPECIA were uncommon and did not affect most men. A small number of men experienced certain sexual side effects. These men reported one or more of the following: less desire for sex; difficulty in achieving an erection; and, a decrease in the amount of semen. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 2% of men. These side effects went away in men who stopped taking PROPECIA. They also disappeared in most men who continued taking PROPECIA.

In general use, the following have been reported infrequently: allergic reactions including rash, itching, hives and swelling of the lips and face; problems with ejaculation; breast tenderness and enlargement; and testicular pain.

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual side effects.

- **PROPECIA can affect a blood test called PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen) for the screening of prostate cancer. If you have a PSA test done, you should tell your doctor that you are taking PROPECIA.**

Storage and handling.

Keep PROPECIA in the original container and keep the container closed. Store it in a dry place at room temperature. **PROPECIA tablets are coated and will prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling, provided that the tablets are not broken or crushed.**

Do not give your PROPECIA tablets to anyone else. It has been prescribed only for you. Keep PROPECIA and all medications out of the reach of children.

THIS LEAFLET PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ABOUT PROPECIA. IF AFTER READING THIS LEAFLET YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ARE NOT SURE ABOUT ANYTHING, ASK YOUR DOCTOR.

1-800-830-7375, Monday through Friday, 8:30 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M. (ET).

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continued from page 19

don't know what to expect this season. These guys could all take turns coming to town with 65 each. I'm hoping the house isn't packed, everybody sitting there waiting for you to give up a bomb."

That's the spirit—straight ahead and on the track now. After all, it can't be that Brewtal. Last season Bagwell hit just one homer off Milwaukee; McGwire batted a lowly .212; and the Brewers split 12 games against Sosa's Cubs. Of course, someone of the Big Ragusa's ilk might point out that Big Mac did launch three homers or that Sosa smashed six brew moon shots and that Griffey's going to be licking his chops to get a hold of baseball's 25th worst team-E.R.A. club from a year ago. "I pitched to Griffey in my third game up [in 1997]," says Woodard. "He waited for his pitch, then hit two out that day. With a guy like McGwire, if he jumps on the first one and demolishes it foul, I won't look at him before I throw another. If you look him in the eye, he's got you."

How can you not pull for this guy and his pitching pals? Hopes & dreams ... truth & justice ... Laverne & Shirley ... Kosnowski & The Squiggmann. Woodard & Jamie Navarro.

Here's hoping for a Brew-bonic plague on the sluggers' bats come September. We say to Brewers pitchers: On your marks, get set and go now. Do it your way and when you do it your way, yes your way, you'll make all your dreams come true.

For me and you. —*Michael Kane*

FROM TOP: RICK SOLOMAN/ALLSPORT; TOM DIPACE

BAGS AROUND THE BAGS

They Said What?

NEVER MIND THE KIDS WHO SAY THE DARNEDEST THINGS. WHAT ABOUT THE SPORTS REPORTERS who ask the dumbest questions? Most athletes and coaches are too gracious, too image-conscious or too shocked to answer honestly, but here's what SPORT recommends if some of the bigger names feel like offering snappy answers to silly questions. —M.K. and B.G.

Silly Question: Coach, what will you tell the team at halftime?
Snappy Answer: I'll tell them to wait for me to use the bathroom, to sit quietly until everyone is done with their punch and snack, and then I was thinking I might spin a few tales about the time the wife and I went fishing with Ronald Reagan.

Silly Question: Coach, talk about missed opportunities.
Snappy Answer: Well, there was this one time, in I think it was seventh grade, when Mandy Longaker was gonna ask me to the Sadie Hawkins dance that was comin' up real soon. But while I was fixin' to get seconds in the lunch line, 'cuz it was chicken patties that day and I loved them chicken patties, she couldn't find me and I reckon she saw my buddy, Todd, and they wound up going to that dance. They got in trouble for neckin' under the bleachers, but wound up gettin' married right after school and they inherited all Mandy's dad's oil money.

Silly Question: So, Steve Trachsel, you gave up No. 62 to Mark McGwire. How did it feel?
Snappy Answer: Dude, it was awesome. So cool. Sometimes in life you have to take advantage of the opportunities that are presented to you. C'mon, think about it. How often does a guy have a chance to break Maris' record? Better yet, how often does a pitcher have the chance to throw the record-breaking pitch? That thing stood for 37 years. The pitch might have been my one and only chance. I'm gonna be in the Hall of Fame!

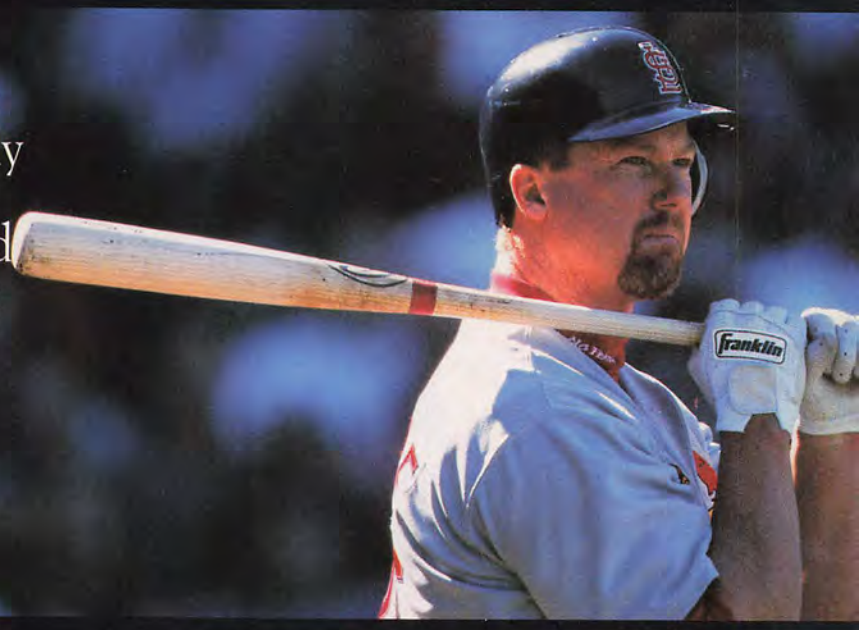
Silly Question: How did you feel playing your first pro game in front of your family and friends, back here near your old neighborhood where it all began for you?
Snappy Answer: Financially secure beyond all comprehension. I make more than the entire town of Crownsville combined. In half a season. And because of my absurd earning power and lucrative endorsement deals, the snot-nosed little punks worship me like a god.

Silly Question: Any butterflies before the game?
Snappy Answer: Nah. Peking raviolis, won-ton soup and fried bananas.

Silly Question: Ah, Shaq, any thoughts on why you tend to miss so many free throws?
Snappy Answer: Thank you for asking. I've been pondering this for a while now and I've come to the conclusion that everything cannot be in harmony, as Phil says it should. The triangle offense, the philosophy of Zen all intertwined into our practices—it's unnatural. Perfection is an unattainable goal sought only by the unenlightened and misguided. I'm just trying to teach Phil that some chaos and disorder is a necessity in the world, like on SuperFriends with the Legion of Doom. But fans still love me, I still get paid gobs of cake and it gives people something to talk about. But most of all, it disrupts Phil's Zen crap.

SWIRE
5

"I thought about how much I really loved the game, and I just decided that there wasn't any room for pouting or complaining or anything but doing my best."



Then and Wow

Ever Heard of a Guy Named McGwire? Believe It or Not, Five Years Ago, Baseball Experts Had Written Him Off > By Scott Ostler

It's hard to look at McGwire now and believe that he actually sat out the last game of the 1991 season to avoid hitting below .200.

IN A PREVIOUS BASEBALL LIFETIME, MARK MCGWIRE WAS TOAST. BY THE AGE OF 27, BIG MAC had become one-eighth of a ton of whiff 'n' shrug. The only thing he did consistently was cash his paycheck. It was embarrassing. If you're a big guy to start, then you pump yourself up even more, you'd better bring some serious pop to the plate. Otherwise it's like strutting into the pool hall, whipping out your inlaid-pearl cue, and chalking up the wrong end of the stick. People snicker.

In 1991 at 27, Mark McGwire was over the hill, fading into mediocrity. The low point may have been the last day of the 1991 season, when Oakland A's manager Tony LaRussa took McGwire aside before the game to discuss an embarrassing personal matter.

"You're hitting .201, Mark," LaRussa said. "If you take an oh-fer today, you dip under two. Let's sit you down."

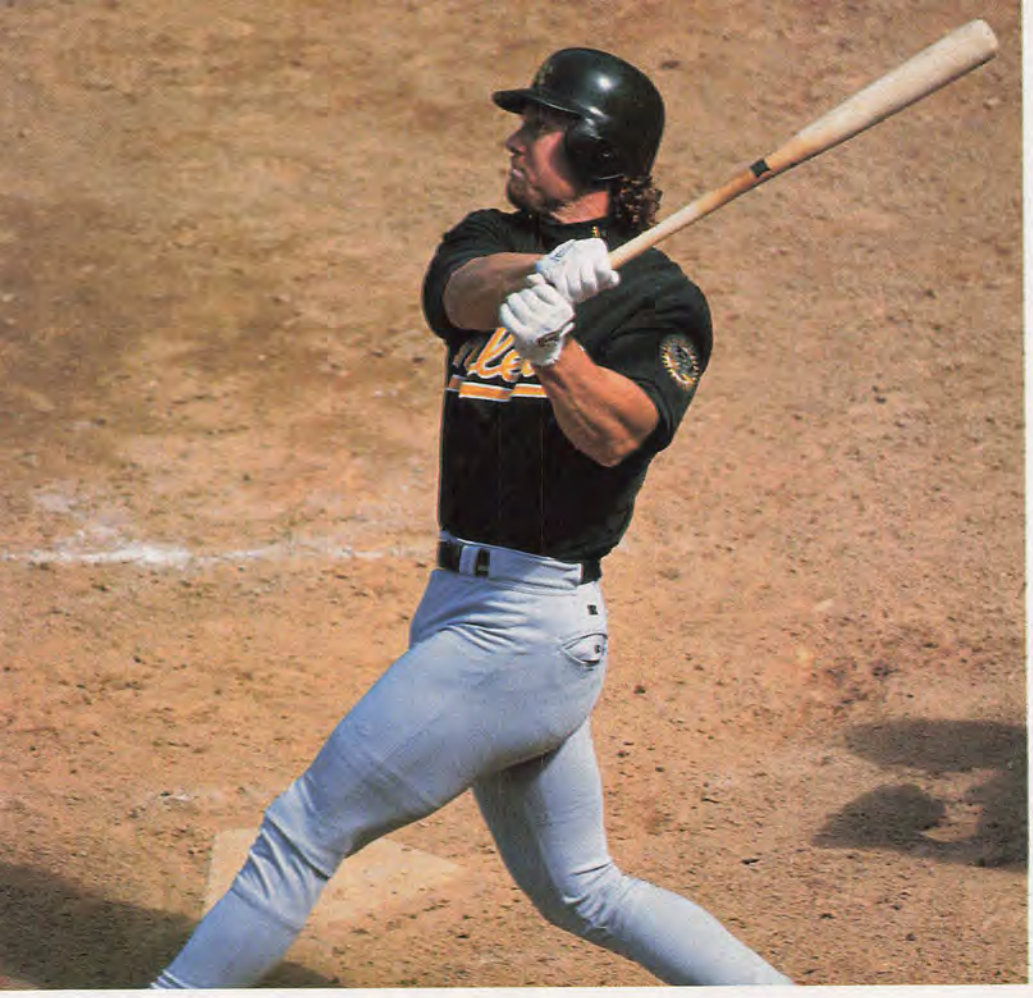
A buck-ninety-nine. Sounds like a closeout sale of damaged merchandise. McGwire elected to sit that game. "For a man of Mark's talent, sitting out to protect a .201, that's *low*," LaRussa says today with a grimace.

That season looked like the end of the dream for McGwire, the slugging phenom who hit 49 homers his rookie year of '87 and then started downhill. As LaRussa has said, "His problems started before the .201 year. The game can get away from you, you lose the feel. It's a sensitive thing, playing major league baseball."

But McGwire would pull himself out of the Great Spiritual Funk of '91, only to plunge into The Injury Years, '93 and '94, which effectively ended his career. The wise men of baseball nodded and whispered about McGwire's substance abuse, and the substance was iron. He lifted weights, got too muscle-bound. The more he looked like Popeye, the more he hit like Olive Oyl.

It was obvious, wasn't it?

THIS PAGE: BRIAN SPURLOCK; OPPOSITE: SPORTS IMAGERY



When McGwire batted .201 with 22 measley dingers in '91, it proved the oldest theory in baseball, that weightlifting robs a player of flexibility. You lift weights, you start playing baseball like Al Gore dances the funky chicken. Sure, a lot of baseball guys were into weightlifting by '91, but not like McGwire. At 235, 20 pounds over his rookie weight, he was pumped up like a monster-truck tire.

McGwire protested that weights weren't the cause of his problems. Just the opposite, he said. In '91 he was going through a divorce, was hurting emotionally, stopped lifting weights and stopped caring about baseball.

And he proved the critics wrong, but only briefly. After '91, McGwire took stock. His conclusion: Mark McGwire is a big, fat idiot. He went to a psychiatrist, got back to the weight work with a vengeance, and said later, "I thought about how much I really loved the game, and I just decided that there wasn't any room for pouting or complaining or anything but doing my best."

Sounds great. The 6-foot-5 McGwire added 15 more pounds of muscle, to 250, and had a fine year in '92. But soon his body fell apart, proving that serious weight-training and baseball go together like nachos and whipped cream. McGwire's feet broke down, and his back was a chronic problem. The man had simply overloaded his skeletal structure, right? Simple physics. It was like sticking a watermelon on top of an ice cream cone. Crunch.

With McGwire, it wasn't just one foot injury, it was a mini-series. Doctors tried everything but leeches and blood-letting. He had two surgeries on his left heel and appeared in just 74 combined games during '93 and '94. Forget chasing Sammy; McGwire was chasing the immortal Troy Neel—tying him at 37 for most starts at first base for the A's in '94.

In the spring of '94 someone asked Dave McKay, the A's first-base coach who supervised the team's weight training, if it was possible that McGwire was breaking down because he was too heavy. "Yeah, absolutely," McKay said. "I'm not going to sit here and say the bigger you get the better ballplayer you get to be. I would like to see McGwire lighter."

LaRussa didn't order McGwire out of the weight room, because Tony is a new-age manager. He was plagued by small injuries early in his brief playing career, then took up weight-lifting and says it made him more durable. But the pumped-up LaRussa was 175 pounds, not 250. Still, if manager Tony had ordered his players to lay off the weights, there would have been mutiny. The A's were in love with muscle. Jose Canseco was huge, and Rickey Henderson and Rueben Sierra didn't mind pausing in front of a mirror to flex.

None of them, for all their rock-hard muscles, had a sensational record for durability. The once-mighty A's were looked upon as flakes and jakes. The fans weren't thrilled: *Are you guys here to play baseball or audition for "Baywatch"? Hey, McGwire, for five mil a year, take an aspirin and grab a bat.*

The A's were paying McGwire a ton of money to do power squats in the weight room and diddly-squat on the field. It was a time of growing fan resentment of overpaid stars, and here was one who didn't even suit up. Mark had always been a friendly, easygoing fellow, but he started to get grouchy and withdrawn. It was clear he would never learn to be comfortable with the media. Writers tried not to ask him questions that contained phrases like *plantar fascia*, a reference to his heel problems.

The more McGwire struggled, mentally and physically, the more he hit the weights. As he says, "What I do in the weight room, it's more on a personal level. I don't really lift heavy weights, I go there for peace of mind."

It's too bad McGwire fell apart physically, because he was just getting it all together as a person and a hitter. The A's hired Doug Rader as batting coach in '92 and Rader and McGwire hit it off. Rader didn't re-make

McGwire rebounded in 1995 with Oakland and has been nothing less than smashing in St. Louis.

IN FACT

The first team to draft McGwire? The Montreal Expos picked him in the eighth round of the 1981 draft before McGwire attended USC. Oakland later picked him in the first round (10th overall) of the '84 draft.

FROM TOP: RON VESELY; BRIAN SPURLOCK

McGwire's swing, he un-made it. Stripped away the ticks and hitches and French pastry.

Nobody before had explained to McGwire that the fewer moving parts in a swing, the fewer chances for failure. Soon Big Mac had one of the simplest, cleanest strokes in the game. And until Rader, nobody had explained to McGwire that it's good to think hitting strategy but bad to overthink the swing and wallow in worry. As Confucious would have said, had he been a hitting coach, "Vast difference between empty head and clear mind."

"It was Doug Rader that taught me to relax my mind," McGwire says. And McGwire, while he was sitting on the bench most of '93 and '94, decided to learn baseball. "Before that, Mark always wanted to keep it simple," LaRussa says. "He wouldn't study, and pitchers were adjusting to his talent. Jose was much more analytical than Mark was."

Wow, think about that. When people talk about the deep-thinking students of the game, how often does the young Jose Canseco come up?

"I sat in the dugout," McGwire says, "and started studying the pitchers, started seeing the rotation on the ball. I got to where I would get in the box with a game plan for every pitcher. Before, I just got in the box and reacted to what they were throwing. Waaay big difference."

McGwire got to the point where LaRussa would say, "I think he's stronger between the ears than he is in the body. He really is pressure-proof. Ever see *Happy Gilmore*, where Happy goes to that Happy Place in his mind? Mark's got a place he goes to, where he's oblivious to everything outside. It's incredible."

Baseball's leading active home run hitter celebrates sending another one into the seats.

Ah, but what good was it for McGwire to reach that state of enlightenment? By the end of '94, he had pretty much given up on baseball, and vice versa. His future was all behind him.

Good guy, sad story. That McGwire kid, he could have been one of the all-time greats. ■

BRIAN SPURLOCK

GIMME FIVE

In the five seasons since injuries knocked him down, McGwire has fought back. Here is a comparison of his pre- and post-1995 statistics, prior to the 2000 season.

Prior to 1995		Since 1995
9*	Seasons	5
990	Games	698
238	Home Runs	284
1	Seasons with more than 45 HR	4
14.04	AB/HR	8.13
657	RBIs	620
585	Walks	600

*parts of nine seasons

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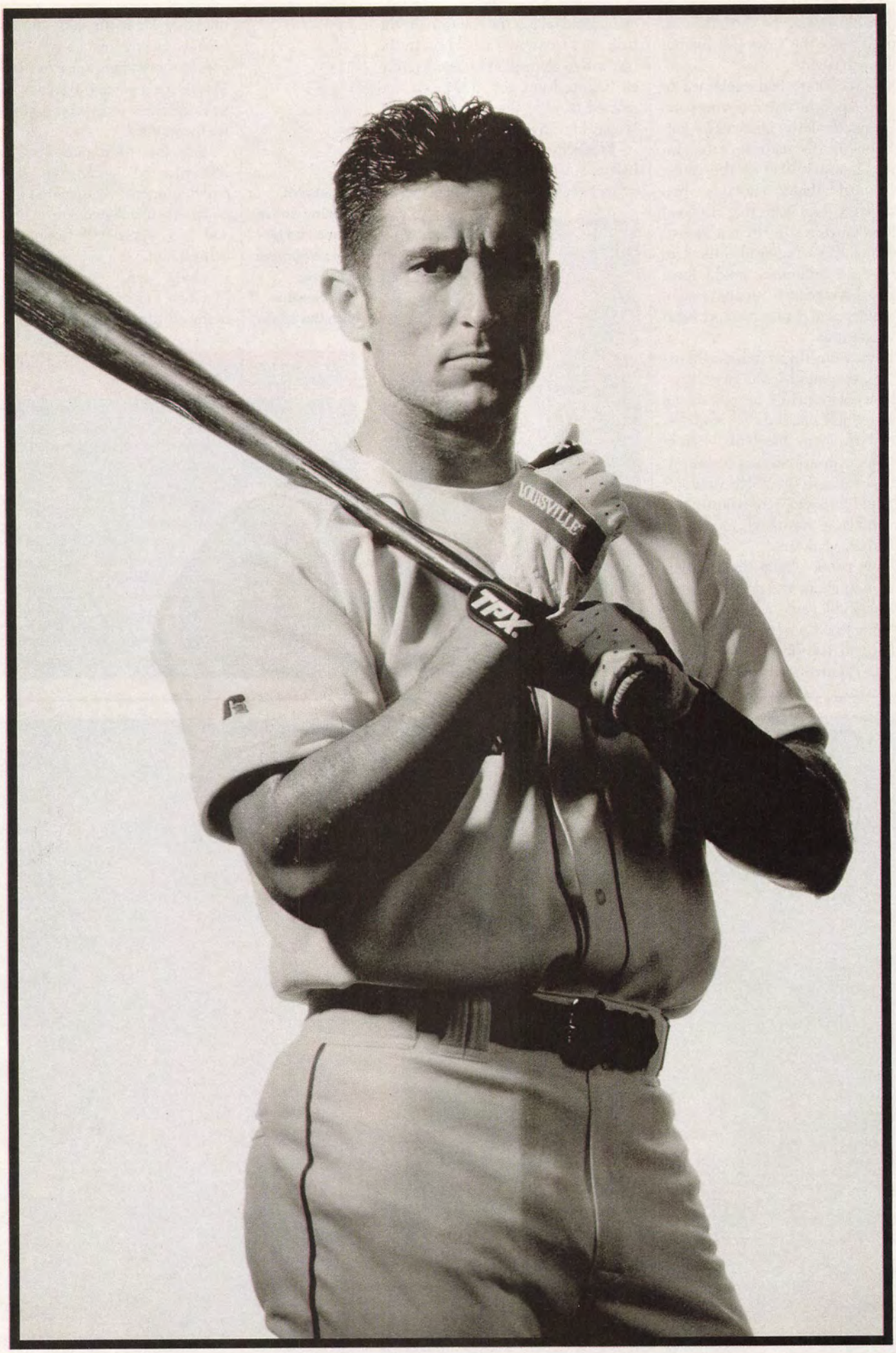

LOUISVILLE
TPX

On the Short List

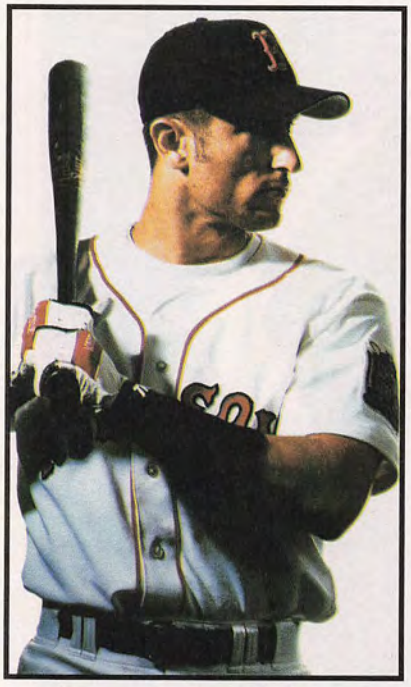
Boston's Nomar Garciaparra Is Already One of Baseball's Best But He's Really Just a Big Little Kid > By Scott Burton • Photography By Michael Indresano

THE POOR KID. THE POOR, SILLY, STUPID KID. HE'S GOT A HECK OF A SWING, and a heck of an arm, and a heck of an attitude, but would you just look at the way he's dressed. Yankees hat? Yankees cap? Yankees pants? What a disaster, what a complete and utter disaster. Maybe the Derek Jeter look plays in Connecticut, or New Jersey, or Vermont, but man almighty, it doesn't play here. In the heart of Massachusetts! At Nomar and Mo's baseball camp! No way. There's gonna be trouble for this. Big trouble ....

Here it comes. Nomar has spotted the kid. And Nomar is mad. And Nomar is telling Mo. And Mo is mad. And they're whispering, and pointing, and they're on their tippy-toes sneaking up behind his back, and ... Lord have mercy! There goes the jersey. There goes the hat. And here comes Nomar's lecture: New York bad. Boston good. You better show up to camp tomorrow with a Red Sox hat. "Or the Angels," Mo says. Or the Angels. But no more Yankees. No! More! Yankees! You hear me?

The kid nods in stunned silence. Nomar and Mo walk off. The kid continues to nod. Then he pauses for a second, looks around, and ... grins. A tiny, sheepish grin. And he yells to his dad in the bleachers, and waves for him to come over, and with that grin still etched on his face, the poor, silly, stupid kid hands over his Yankees gear.

Derek Jeter don't play here no more.



When Nomar puts on his Red Sox uniform, he's all business.

"I'M JUST A KID AT HEART," SAYS Nomar Garciaparra, leaning forward in a chair that's about 15 sizes too small in a dingy chemistry labroom at Bridgewater State College. He is trying to explain why his buddy and erstwhile Red Sox infielder Lou Merloni got a bigger pop out of the campers than he did yesterday. The answer turns out to be pretty simple—Merloni grew up about 20 minutes from here—but, as Nomar is wont to do, he chooses his words carefully and deliberately. "I made them comfortable out there, and hopefully they realize I'm just like them."

Just like them? Well, let's see now: This Kid at Heart makes about $5 million a year, is recognized everywhere he goes, and may just be the best baseball player in the game today. Not that any of that matters, or anything. This Kid at Heart also has a smile that breaks out spontaneously every 10 seconds or so, and eyes that widen like the moon when someone under five feet tall is talking to him. He does a brilliant impersonation of the wrestler The Rock—right down to the People's Eyebrow. He knows better than to pat a kid on the head (they hate that!), and he doesn't high-five the kids to death either (they hate that even more!). And, oh yeah, he totally digs the U.S. women's soccer team. Just like the kids.

"You know when you're a kid, you wear the jersey of whatever your team is?" says Paul Rappoli, one of Nomar's closest friends and director of his baseball hitting clinics. "At one of our camps, one of our campers had a Nomar Garciaparra jersey on, and Nomar comes up to me and goes, 'Is that unbelievable or what? He bought a shirt with my name on the back!' Nomar thought it was awesome. He was blown away."

"I've always dreamed of being a major-league baseball player," says Nomar.

A baseball player blown away by a kid—now that's refreshing, isn't it? It's also incredibly ironic, for The Kid at Heart never was much of a kid himself. He never had a favorite player growing up in Southern California, never hunted for Reggie Jackson autographs, or collected baseball cards, or listened to Vin Scully and Joe Garagiola on Saturday afternoons. "I wasn't hung up like that," he explains. No, Nomar was much more interested in playing the game, studying the game, and learning the game. He went to Anaheim Stadium not to see the Angels play, but to ask questions, an endless barrage of questions. Where does the shortstop go when the ball is hit in the gap? Who covers first base if the bunt goes up the first-base line? Who backs up home plate if there's a runner on second?

"One year, the parents in Little League gave him a trophy," says his dad, Ramon. "It said, 'No-nonsense Nomar.' " The Kid at Heart was six.

None of this, of course, is normal. And it gets worse. When Nomar was in high school, he played football in the fall, soccer in the spring, and baseball in the summer—and could have gotten athletic scholarships in all three. Baseball was his best sport, naturally, but not by much. "Joe-Max Moore is in Europe playing soccer, and Nomar played against him," his dad says. "We used to say Nomar was pretty good compared to him. He'd probably be playing pro." Football was more of a lark. His dad forced him to try out when he was a freshman, to give him another outlet for his athletic talent. Nomar weighed 135 pounds at the time. "I told him, if you want to quit after the first year, you can, but you have to give it a chance," Ramon says. "I told him to be a placekicker, because placekickers don't get hurt." Nomar ended up playing all four years—as a kicker and a wide receiver. On a lark.

Nomar wasn't a bad student either. He graduated with a 4.3 G.P.A.

There's more. After his senior year of high school, he was drafted by the Milwaukee Brewers in the fifth round. They offered him $175,000—a real, nice number, one that Nomar was seriously considering until the Brewers claimed that they were going to have to think about it some more. Before the Brewers had realized what they had done, Nomar was in Hawaii on vacation, an offer to play on the Junior Olympic team in his pocket and a free ride to Georgia Tech locked up. "Just because Milwaukee decided to play games," Ramon says, "Nomar left."

There's more. There was the time in college when Nomar played in the second game of a doubleheader after being taken to the hospital for dehydration after the first. The time he was sitting in a major-league dugout as part of a touring team, saw one of the players drinking, and called his dad almost immediately for some perspective. The time he earned a spot on the 1992 U.S. Olympic team as a walk-on—and was elected captain. The time he ... well, there's much more, too much more. "The game itself is my drive, my inspiration," Nomar explains. "I always dreamed about being a major-league

FROM LEFT: JON SOOHOO; AL MESSERSCHMIDT

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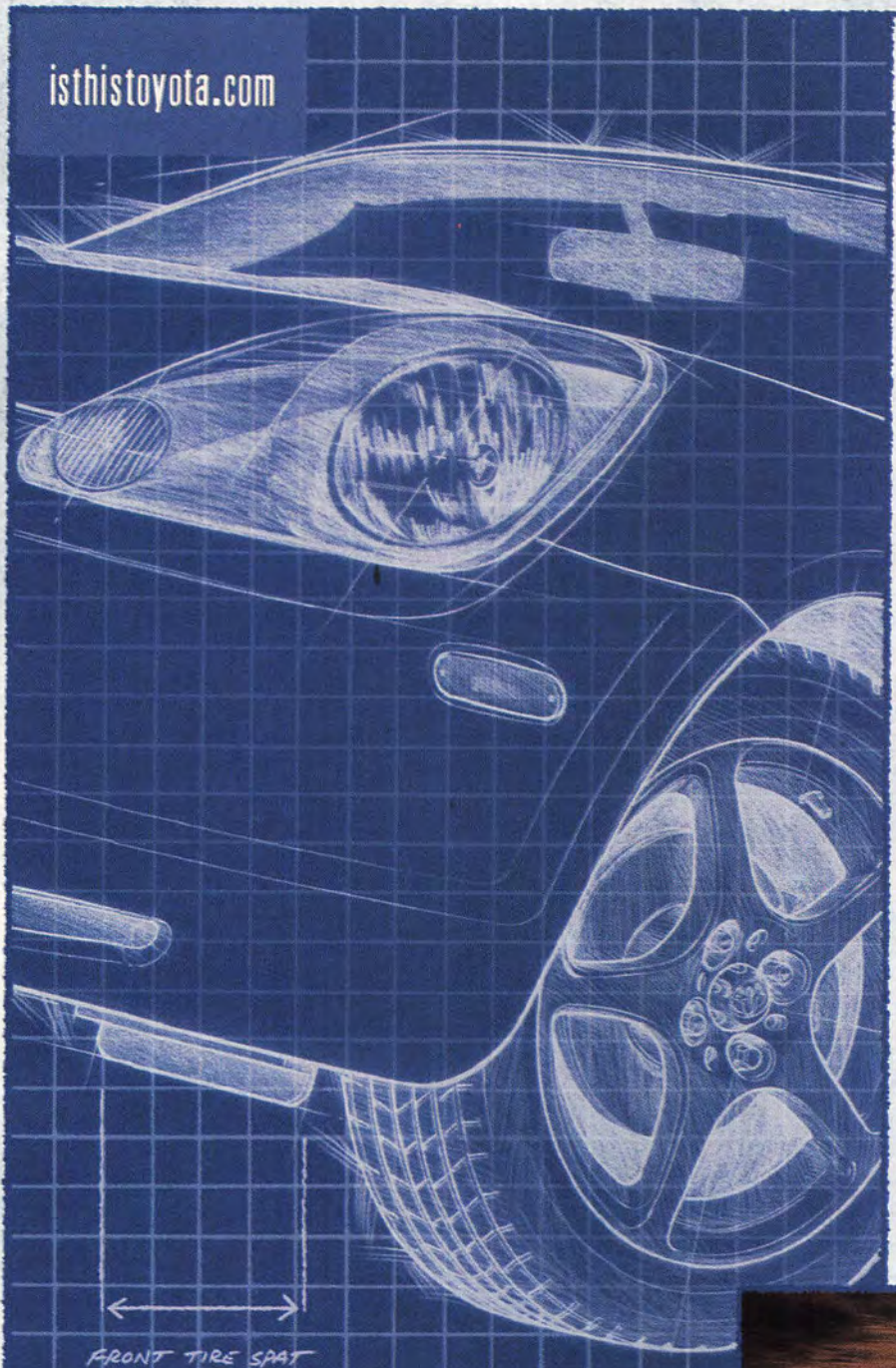

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"We've never won a World Series, and the city lets you know about it. But it's good to have that, in a sense, because it makes you work that much harder."

–Nomar Garciaparra

baseball player—thought about it and worked at it."

Even as Nomar has realized that dream, No-Nonsense still runs the show. At least when he has his Red Sox uniform on. Most reporters know to keep their distance from Nomar before and after games, and pretty much count on his answers to fall into the team-first cliche variety. Nomar won't admit to being afraid of any pitchers, but he certainly won't talk smack about any of them either. Think he should know the pitcher who gave up Nomar's first home run? He didn't, until the guy, John Wasdin, introduced himself at spring training. "I didn't know who I hit it off," Nomar says, "I just knew I hit it." As Mo Vaughn puts it, "He's very, very quiet, but he plays the hell out of the game."

Around the kids, though, it's different. Much different. Danny Hall, his coach at Georgia Tech, has a favorite story about Nomar, one he likes to tell when anyone goes sniffing around about his former All-American: After a batting practice at Fenway Park last year, Nomar looked into the stands, spotted some kid, yelled, "Hey, I know you," and started talking to him. It turned out, Nomar had met the kid once, at spring training the year before. They had played catch. For five minutes.

The Kid at Heart never hit a home run off of him.

HAVING JUST REVEALED HIS FAVORITE bars in Boston, his salsa music leanings, and that his best side is his "backside" (photo shoots have an amazing way of bringing out the nonsense), Nomar lets loose with a real doozy: "I was talking to a psychiatrist back at Georgia Tech about it ..."

"NOMAR TALKS TO SHRINK!" someone in the background shouts. "There's your headline."

"No, no. I was talking to a friend who was a psychiatrist. I wasn't talking to a shrink." Nomar laughs. "She says that maybe they are OCDs."

"They", of course, are the much-discussed, much-ballyhooed, highly successful habits—or is it Obsessive Compulsive Disorders?—that Nomar performs during the season. The tugging of the glove. The tapping of the shoe. The spitting into the glove. They are not superstitions, Nomar will have you know, they're routines. "It's important to be comfortable out there," Nomar says. "Having a routine makes me comfortable."

It must be working. In a game that is for most frustrating and infuriating, Nomar has a way of looking amazingly at ease. He has one of the sweetest swings in the game, loaded with power. He is a brilliant shortstop, graceful and quick. And he has an arm strong as they come. "I remember playing center field behind him in the Fall League one year," says Rappoli, a minor-league teammate of Nomar's. "There was a hard hit over second base. I thought I was going to have to come in and get it to the cutoff man. He got to the ball, and threw the guy out. I was in awe."

In his three full years in the major leagues, Nomar has a Rookie of the Year award, two All-Star berths, two gold gloves, and one batting title. He holds records for the most RBIs by a leadoff man, and hitting streak for a rookie, and he's averaged about 30 home runs, 100 runs and 100 RBIs. There haven't been MVP awards for Nomar yet, but there will be. There hasn't been a World Series yet, either, but there will be that too.

Should we say that again? There will be a World Series for Nomar and the Red Sox too. Seriously.

Maybe you've heard of the musical, "No No, Nanette," or of the Bambino Curse. Maybe you're familiar with the names Ed Morris, Dale Alexander, Harry Aggannis and Bill Buckner. Maybe the years 1947, 1967, 1975 and 1986 mean something to you. None

Between Pedro Martinez's pitching and Nomar's hitting and fielding, Red Sox fans have good reason to feel optimistic.

FROM TOP: AL MESSERSCHMIDT; PAUL JASIENSKI

of it means anything to Nomar, and therein lies the key. "Somebody once asked me what I thought of the 'Curse of the Bambino,' " Nomar says. "And I said, 'I'm from L.A., I don't know what the heck you're talking about. I play for the Red Sox *now*.' "

Nomar is not oblivious, though, of "how it is around here." The 83-year World Series drought has rendered Red Sox fans somewhat testy, and sometimes even a bit delirious. They are a little more educated than the average fan, and a lot more serious. They treat Boston's best players like heroes for life (Ted Williams, Carl Yastrzemski); they also tear down other players with just the slightest provocation (Roger Clemens, Mo Vaughn). "We've never won a World Series, and the city lets you know about it," Nomar says. "But it's good to have that, in a sense, because it makes you work that much harder. People can become complacent, satisfied. Here, you won't become complacent." Says Ramon: "You know that it has to be a bit much sometimes. It's hard to have someone yell at you, 'Oh, you stink.' But in a way, Nomar says, they know what they are talking about. In that way, he turns things around: It's a baseball town, at least they know their baseball."

When Ramon is asked whether he worries the town will ever turn on Nomar, the way it did on Vaughn when he left as a free agent last year, you can almost hear him chew on his answer for a little bit. "Oh, I think about that," he says. "My biggest thing is, if you keep yourself clean, and things get changed on you, as long as you are happy with yourself, that's the main thing. You can't please everybody."

It's only getting harder. When Vaughn was still here, and the object of everybody's attention, it was easy for Nomar to duck the spotlight. When Mo left, all eyes turned to Nomar, and he responded with his best season to date, leading the undermanned Red Sox to the playoffs. In the process, it became readily apparent to Red Sox fans that Nomar and teammate Pedro Martinez are the city's best hope for a World Series since Rice and Rocket, and they treat Nomar accordingly. "When he and I played together in Arizona," Rappoli says, "Michael Jordan was on our team. After a game, we would go out to dinner and shoot some pool. They would have to rope off an area where Michael Jordan would be. With Nomar, it's almost to that point. I can remember going out to dinner with him in the city and not one person knew who he was. Now, wherever he goes out, it can get pretty crazy because so many people just want to come up and shake his hand."

Sometimes, it is too crazy. Nomar is fond of saying that he's no different than everyone else—that when he goes home to his parent's house, he still takes out the trash. But when he's not treated like everyone else, at least not in a respectful manner, it stirs him. After being voted into the All-Star game at Fenway Park last year due to a controversial onslaught of on-line votes, Nomar was asked if he was flattered. "Is it flattering when people bum-rush me at a hotel, harassing us for autographs and your clothes get marked up?" Nomar responded. "You get followed home and they're running through red lights to get to you. I don't go home. I drive around the city looking for the police." Flattered, apparently, was not the word.

But Nomar is learning to deal with it, and he counts on his friends and especially his family to make sure he keeps his head on straight. "Oh, we get a phone call from him, every day, every other day," says Ramon. "Sometimes, he goes, 'Oh, I don't want to go there and sign, I'm too tired.' And we tell him, 'Hey, don't go there with that attitude. You've got to spend some time.' And he'll go, 'You're right, you're right.' We keep him grounded."

This offseason, in particular, was a busy one for Nomar. He had a fashion shoot for one magazine and was on the cover of another. There was the baseball camp, of course. Most impressively, though, there was the *New York Daily News*, the tabloid and home paper of the rival Yankees, running a snippet of gossip about Nomar having been seen at lunch with soccer star Mia Hamm.

Apparently, Derek Jeter don't play there no more, either. ■

OVERTIME

For more stories about Nomar and the Red Sox, check out *Tales from the Dugout* by Jim Prime, published by Sports Publishing Inc.

FACT

Garciaparra is the first Major Leaguer since Mark McGwire (and just the fifth in history) to hit 30-plus HRs in his first two seasons.

CARDINALS
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Milwaukee
2000
MILWAUKEE
BREWERS
SEASON
TICKETS
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BREWERS
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BALLGAME
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Here Comes the Pitch

There's Nothing Quite So Optimistic—Or Is It Over the Edge?—As a Baseball Team's Season-Ticket Brochure. > By David Scott and John Roach • Photography By Robert Lorenz

WHAT'S THE EASIEST JOB IN sports? Simple—promoting season-ticket purchases for the Cleveland Indians. With 373 straight sellouts entering 2000—and a season-ticket waiting list of several thousand—the job's like being the Cardinals' third-base coach when Mark McGwire hits a moon shot—just keep waving 'em on in.

Ahhh, but life's not so easy for the rest of baseball's off-the-field pitchers. Just how does a small-market marketer market a team with little to market? Say that five times fast and you know what it's like to promote the Kansas City Royals. The trick: it's all about wooing and luring, about convincing sane-minded people to do insane things, like, say, buy season tickets to see sub-.500 baseball.

Make no mistake, when it comes to the Royals' marketing efforts, "You Gotta Love These Guys!" Of course it would help if you knew who the heck these guys were, but with a brochure offering a Top 10 list of reasons to buy Royals season tickets, the motivation is already included: No. 10—"No waiting in line, no service charges and no missing big games." And the Royals last "big game" was in 19-what? '85?

No. 8–"Personal service from a Royal Lancer. You will be the king!" Could we even make this stuff up? By the way, unless a Royal Lancer is an offspring of a Solid Gold Dancer, we want no personal service from he, she or it.

The San Diego Padres narrowed their own list of reasons to buy to one, asking, "What's the number one reason to have Season Tickets?" Their answer—Fun, though if Padres baseball is Fun we don't want to know what's considered Depressing. At least with the Texas Rangers, you're promised more than your money's worth. After all, "It's Not Just a Ticket." It's also a hat, a broach or a pterodactyl.

There are a number of approaches to season-ticket promotion. In these player-movement crazy days, some teams consider mentioning players as risky as signing Dennis Rodman. Other teams don't sell the future as much as they pitch the past, hoping it will repeat itself.

The Dodgers say, "Memories captured at Dodger Stadium last forever." Just like a Dodger Dog. Others commemorating memories include the Pirates (30 years of stars like Stargell, Clemente and ... Drabek?) and Reds (the 25th and 10th world championship anniversaries. Hold the Roses, please).

In lieu of suiting up *its* legends, Minnesota's plea features a letter from

Harmon Killebrew promising season ticket purchasers that he will "personally send ... an autographed gift that no baseball fan should be without." How thoughtful, a blindfold to shield their eyes. However, the Twins packet does warn: "Twins management reserves the right to limit the number of ticket reservations on specific game dates." With an American League-worst average attendance of 14,850 in 1999 , we're thinking that right gets optioned as often as the purchaser's right to buy Twins playoff tickets.

Another approach: Forget players, forget history—we've got a new ballpark! The Pirates, Padres and Brewers promise season-ticket purchases this year ensure priority status for next year's new stadiums. To which we say, hey, a White Castle burger is still a White Castle burger even if it's served in an actual white castle.

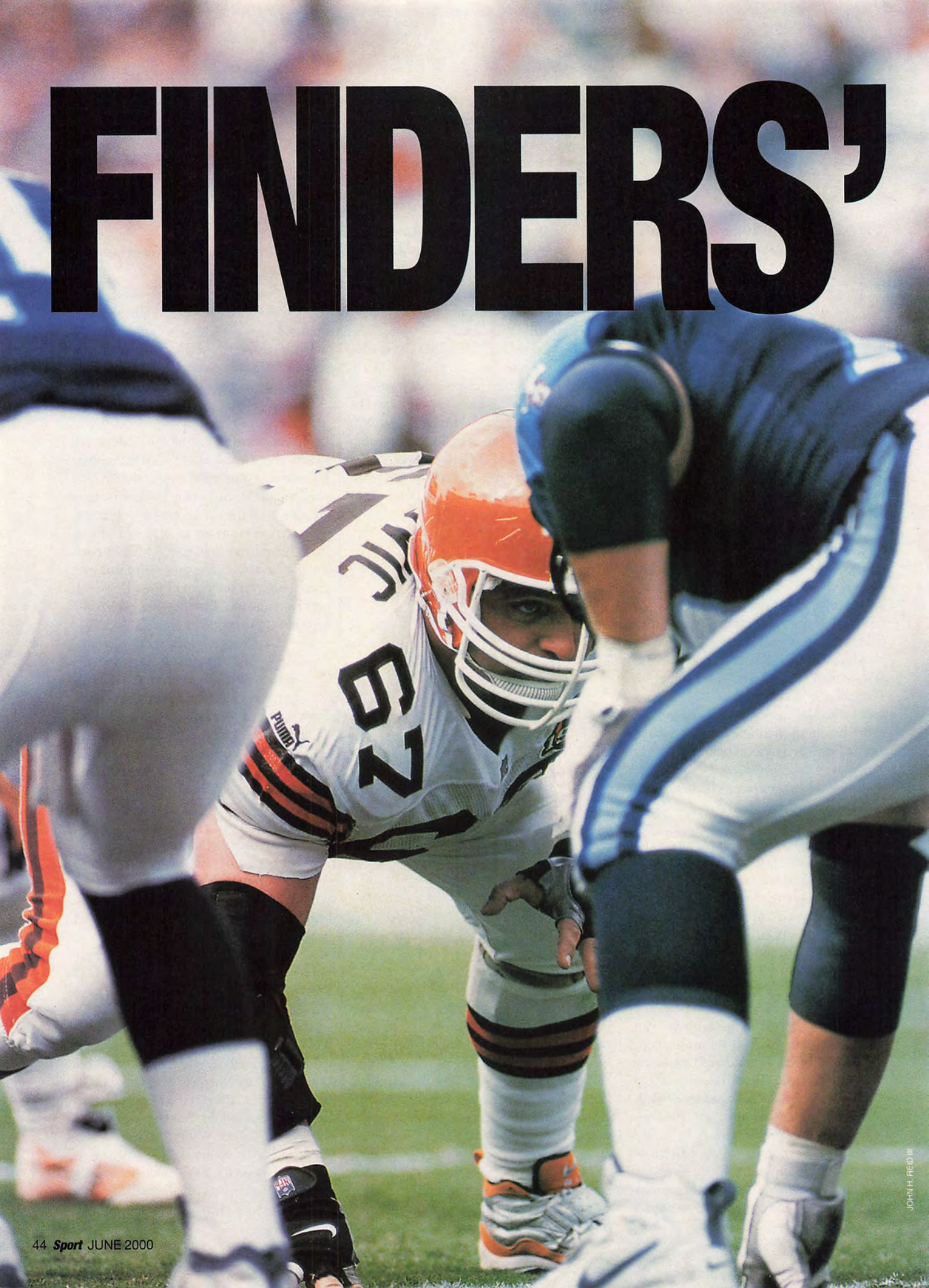
Then, there's (low-budget) Montreal, where the (low-budget) fans are bitter because everyone thinks the (low-budget) players don't want to play in (low-budget) Canada. And the players are bitter because, well, they don't want to play in Canada. Refreshingly, the (low-budget) Expos organization isn't bitter, and they're showing it by proclaiming on the front of their (low-budget) brochure to: "Play (low-budget) Ball!" because "(Low-budget) Baseball's Back!"

It doesn't get much better inside. Apparently Montreal employed the same company that translates assembly instructions for foreign products to do their French-to-English translation. The brochure's first two sentences say it all (we think): "You are a baseball fan or a businessperson! Season tickets are for you!" Still, at least the Expos' plea is goal-oriented: "Montreal will no longer be Major League Baseball's farm system." What, they've been stripped so bare they're now the farm system for Minor League Baseball?

At the other end of the standings, the beauty of the Braves 2000 season ticket brochure is that the dynasty has gotten so good (at not winning the whole thing), they hardly have to advertise the team. Instead they just have a picture of John Rocker dressed as the Statue of Liberty—"Give us your weak, your poor, your wallets .... " Kidding. The brochure tells how season-ticket holders will receive the same number of tickets to the July 11 All-Star game. If they'd waited a while, the cover could have been a picture of John Smoltz's elbow with the tag line: "Come Watch Us Heal!"

But when it comes right down to it—contenders or pretenders—there's really only one thing you can say about baseball's marketing minds: "You gotta love these guys!" ■

FINDERS'



JOHN H. REID III

KEEPERS

The NFL's Biggest Sleepers Reveal the Secret to Going From Nobody to Somebody > By Jim Armstrong

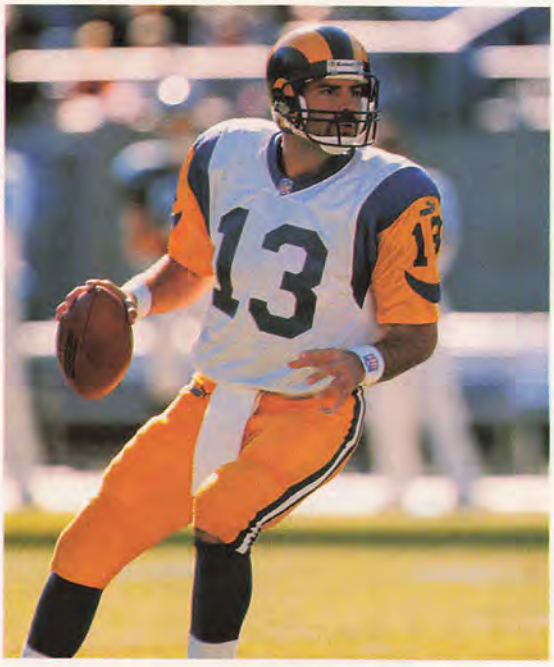
IT'S A GOOD THING JOHN JURKOVIC was doing the playing instead of the scouting. As a college scout, "If I was calling the shots, I wouldn't have taken a look at me," Jurkovic says. He wouldn't have wasted the $5^{1/2}$ seconds it would have taken to time him in the 40. Instead of being at Eastern Illinois, he'd have been up the road watching the real men in the Big Ten, where Jurkovic once dreamed of playing. "You put me next to some stud at the 4-H fair and you're going to take him, not me," Jurkovic says. "I'd be off to the side with my beer belly and my little limp."

Ten years later, Jurkovic is laughing in his beer. He still limps, has ever since that nasty knee reconstruction in college. The good news is that, here it is, a decade down the road, and he still hasn't lost a step. Seems you can't lose what you never had in the first place.

Jurkovic can't play a lick. It says so, right there on the computer printout. He ought to be sitting on a couch somewhere looking for the remote between the cushions. "I never had the size or speed, but I've always known how to play," says Jurkovic, who has played for Miami, Green Bay, Jacksonville and Cleveland. "It's like when Bobby Fischer looks at a chess board. It all made sense to me. I didn't have the size or speed, but, hey, you know, you overcome things."

Jurkovic did it, and he's hardly alone. NFL rosters are loaded—or should we say littered—with players who've risen off the junk heap to make their marks in pro football. They call them sleepers, but, of course, it was the scouts who were asleep. It's an imperfect science, right up there with playing the ponies and predicting the weather.

"For the most part, we want a round peg in a round hole," says Ted Sundquist, the Denver Broncos' director of college scouting. "There are a lot of guys you see who don't fit, but they make it anyway. There are some things that can't be measured. Look at Kurt Warner. Arena football? He had to be saying to himself, 'I've taken it as far as I can. I'm getting my brains beat out, and now they want me to go play in the World League.' Who could have known he had the wherewithal to stick with it?"



Kurt Warner is the Rip Van Winkle of NFL sleepers.

Warner, of course, is the Rip Van Winkle of NFL sleepers, a regular Roy Hobbs in shoulder pads. But there are dozens of others who fit the same profile, who come from the same humble roots, who took the same road-less-traveled to stardom. Many went to small schools, most were undrafted, and some have been cut more than a blackjack deck in Las Vegas. They're a little too small, way too slow and, to a man, they're hard of hearing. Everyone from the head coach to the equipment manager tells them they'll never make it, but they don't listen.

Take the case of London Fletcher, a teammate of Warner's with the St. Louis Rams, whose Super Bowl roster included 19 players who weren't drafted. Fletcher was undrafted out of John Carroll University, located right in the heart of nowhere on the eastern fringe of the northern tip of southcentral Ohio. At least we think that's where it is. To be honest, we had never heard of the place. Turns out it was Don Shula's alma mater too. And now along comes Fletcher—the place is a regular football factory, for crying out loud!

The only reason Fletcher was there was because of his height, or lack thereof. Fletcher is a human fire hydrant. He's listed at 6-foot in the Rams' media guide, but it's all a vicious lie. He admits to $5\text{-}9^{3/4}$. "Some teams worked me out twice, but, in the end, they all got caught up in my height," says Fletcher. "They couldn't measure my heart. I knew I could play all along. It was just a matter of being in the right place at the right time. That's why Dick Vermeil was a perfect guy for me to play for. He never played in the NFL. He had to come up through the ranks. He had to coach in junior college and as a college assistant before he got his chance. He knows what it's like to not be wanted."

So does Jessie Tuggle. One of these years, Tuggle is going to pass the torch

DEHOOG/TDP

to Fletcher as the middle linebacker on the NFL's all-sleeper team. But not just yet. In February, a few weeks before his 35th birthday, he signed a four-year contract with the Atlanta Falcons. If he sees the end of the deal, he'll have played 17 seasons, one more than John Elway. And to think, it was a fluke that he ever got invited to training camp.

The Falcons had plenty of linebackers in 1987. With 16 on their training-camp roster, the last thing they needed was another linebacker. That was before Tuggle's coach at Valdosta (Ga.) State, Mike Cavan, bumped into Falcons coach Marion Campbell at a banquet and did some name dropping. Okay, begging. Thirteen years and five Pro Bowls later, Tuggle, all 5-11 and 230 pounds of him, remains one of the best 'backers in the business.

"We had 90 guys in camp that year," says Tuggle. "If they had the roster limits like they have today, I never would have gotten a chance. I remember walking into that first camp and being really intimidated. They had guys from Georgia and Notre Dame, all over the place, and here I am from Valdosta State. There were 17 linebackers and I was number 17. But you know what? By the first or second day of camp, after you put the gear on, you know who can play and who can't. I knew I could make it. I was a hard-nosed linebacker who loved contact. If nothing else, I was going to bang some people around and make them notice me."

London Fletcher calls Dick Vermeil, "The perfect guy for me to play for."

BRIAN BAHR/ALLSPORT

By the third preseason game, Tuggle had risen to the ranks of starter, if only by default. Two linebackers ahead of him on the depth chart had gone down with injuries. Since Campbell employed a 3-4 defense, he suddenly found himself short of linebackers. The only break Tuggle ever needed or asked for had arrived. "Coach Campbell comes up to me and says, 'I know you're a small guy from a small school, but you're knocking the hell out of people in camp. Do the same thing in the game, okay?' First of all," Tuggle says, "I was

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By Stanley Newman

Across

1. Daily double, for one
4. It broadcast the Daytona 500 last February
7. Revered nickname in Baltimore
10. Cocker spaniel or canary
13. Poetic "before"
14. Tint
15. "Arli$$" network
16. UF sports drink (suffix)
17. Doctors' organization: Abbr.
18. Commit an NHL infraction
19. Predecessor of the CIA: Abbr.
20. A Little League qualification
21. Super Bowl XXXIV winners
23. Former Phillie who wrote "I Ain't an Athlete, Lady..."
25. __ Drago ("Rocky IV" foe)
26. Mountain West athlete
28. NHL team since 1992
31. "THE MOST DEPENDABLE, LONGEST LASTING TRUCKS"
33. Nolan Ryan, for nine seasons
34. Pebble Beach is one
35. Sportscaster Storm
39. Defensive missile: Abbr.
40. Incoming plane: Abbr.
41. Capital of Kansas
45. KeyArena team
48. Hardly a he-man
51. Umps make them
52. Stay with the leader: 2 wds.
55. Army training group: Abbr.
56. Mr. Trammell
57. 1952 Winter Olympics site
59. Did the crawl
63. Agile, as a yacht
64. Don Meredith's alma mater: Abbr.
66. Giant in Cooperstown
68. Outback Bowl winner in '97: Abbr.
69. Hawks' home: Abbr.
70. "You can't __..."
71. "...what you can't __"
72. Portable bed
73. Pivotal, as a play
74. Possesses
75. Baseball-card stat
76. __ of bounds

Down

1. Paul Bryant
2. Columnist Bombeck
3. Jazz or Jaguars
4. Cubs' home: Abbr.
5. Archie Griffin, as an undergrad
6. Fortune teller
7. Fails in the clutch
8. Belly muscles
9. __ Angeles
10. Finnish track legend Nurmi
11. One of the Ravens' mascots
12. High schoolers
22. Plaintiff
24. Letters on Dream Team uniforms
25. Pour __ (exert oneself): 2 wds.
27. What armchair quarterbacks watch
29. To the __ degree
30. Coach Parseghian
31. __ Arena (former Pistons home)
32. Camel feature
34. "The Big __" (Galarraga)
36. Throw out a base runner
37. Chip shots' paths
38. Sosa's 63 in '99: Abbr.
42. "SportsCenter" network
43. Kenyan runner Keino
44. Quick __ wink: 2 wds.
45. Rizzuto's nickname
46. Feedbag morsel
47. World Series predecessor: Abbr.
49. Talent finders
50. Basketball broadcaster's shout
52. Canoe relative
53. Make happy
54. 300-game winner Wynn
58. Come up short
60. Baylor University city
61. Montreal manager
62. McGwire's son
64. "Be quiet!"
65. Ms. Hamm
67. Coffee alternative

See page 87 for Chevy Trucks SPORT Puzzle answers.

SEND YOUR ENTRY TO SPORT MAGAZINE, CHEVY TRUCKS PUZZLE SWEEPSTAKES, 110 Fifth Avenue, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10011. Entries must be postmarked by June 10, 2000.

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY to enter or win. Purchase will not increase your chances of winning. Sweepstakes begins Feb. 1, 2000, and ends Aug. 15, 2000. To enter for a chance to win a monthly first prize for the June issue, send a 3-x-5 card with your name, address and answer to that month's puzzle question. Entries must be postmarked by June 10 and received by June 20. Limit one entry per person per month. Monthly first prize winner will be selected in a random drawing from among all entries received by the monthly deadline. Drawing will be conducted on or about the 15th day of the following month. There are six (6) monthly first prizes (one per month during the sweepstakes), each consisting of two tickets to a regular-season local sporting event of winner's choice (approximate value: $250). All monthly entries are included in the drawing for the grand prize. One (1) grand prize (consisting of round-trip airfare and lodging for two nights for two people and tickets to the sporting event of the winner's choice in the United States—approximate value: $2,500) will be awarded in a random drawing conducted on or about Sept. 15, 2000, from among all monthly entries received. All entries for the grand prize must be postmarked by Aug. 15, 2000, and received by Aug. 20, 2000. Sweepstakes sponsors are EMAP Petersen, L.L.C., and Chevrolet. Sponsors not responsible for late, lost, incomplete, misdirected, incorrectly addressed, illegible, damaged, undeliverable, destroyed, or postage-due entries. Open to legal residents of 49 U.S. States and D.C., except residents of Florida. Void in Florida except where prohibited or restricted by law. Employees of Chevrolet, Emap Petersen, their affiliated companies, parents, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies and their representatives and agents, and their immediate families or members of their households are ineligible to participate in this sweepstakes. Odds of winning dependent upon number of entries received. All federal, state and local laws apply. For a copy of these Official Rules, Answers to Trivia Questions or Winner's List, send a SASE to: SPORT Magazine, Chevy Puzzle Sweepstakes, 110 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011. Please specify "Rules," "Answers," or "Winner's List." Winner's List available after Sept. 30, 2000. WA/VT residents may omit return postage.

AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

happy he even knew my name. When you're a free agent, you don't even know if the coaches know your name. I played well in the game, but I had no idea if I was going to make it. I remember sitting in that room and saying, 'Oh, my goodness, the Turk is going to come and get me tonight.' But he didn't knock on the door. The rest is history."

Jurkovic's problem wasn't that someone was coming for him—it's that no one was. As a high school player in Illinois, he wanted to play in the Big Ten. He gladly would have gone to Northwestern, which at the time was winning a game every other year. But even Northwestern didn't want him. "I remember Illinois State sent me a letter," Jurkovic says. "They said, 'We're looking for big, strong, fast, agile, athletic football players... Unfortunately, you're not one of them.' Eastern Illinois was the only school that wanted me. They said, 'Don't hold it against us, but we think you can play, damn it.' I thought, what the hell. My parents couldn't afford to send me to school. Let's go play football."

After 13 years and five Pro Bowls, Atlanta's Jessie Tuggle is proof that scouts often overlook some of the best players.

"There were 17 linebackers and I was number 17. But you know what? By the first or second day of camp, after you put the gear on, you know who can play and who can't. I knew I could make it."

–Jessie Tuggle

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While Jurkovic got lost in the shuffle in talent-rich Illinois, Mark Schlereth landed at Division I-AA Idaho via Alaska, which produces more flamingos than football players. Four years later, in 1989, he became the first Alaska native ever drafted by an NFL team. Trouble was, he wasn't selected until the 10th round. And by the Redskins, whose offensive line, affectionately known as the Hogs, was the best in the league.

Amazingly, like so many other sleepers, Schlereth could sense he belonged from the beginning, from the first hour of his first mini-camp. But that didn't mean he was going to make the team. There were vulnerable, highly paid veterans all around, none of whom was offering any tips to some wide-eyed kid on how to steal their livelihood. "They weren't divulging any information to me," Schlereth says. "I studied those guys because I had to. They weren't coming up to me and telling me how to play the game, how to succeed. Once you make a team and become a producer for that team, then you earn the respect of your teammates. Then you're one of the guys. There are no more secrets then. But until you get to that point, you're on your own."

SCHLERETH'S EXPERIENCE IS TYPICAL OF sleepers throughout the league. Until they make it, they're on an island, isolated from the veterans, with only their faith in themselves and the occasional phone call from home to keep them going. Sleepers have to make an impact, and they've got to be quick about it. The first cutdown date is three weeks into training camp. By then, a sleeper has to have convinced the coaches to keep him around instead of a draft pick or a veteran who plays the same position.

"It's a small window," says Sundquist. "If you're a small-school guy or you weren't drafted, you've got to show the coaches something right away. Coaches don't have a lot of patience. This is a league where coaches get fired every year. They don't have time for projects. They're not sitting there saying, 'We'll develop him and he'll be a player in three or four years.' You've got to take the ball and run with it or you're gone."

Some sleepers make an impact quicker than others. Fletcher served notice from the very beginning that he wasn't going to hit the waiver wire without a fight. "I had a chip on my shoulder when I wasn't drafted," says Fletcher. "I vowed to take it out on every offense I faced. I had to let them know I was here. My attitude was it was me against the world, and I'm still like that. I feel like they didn't want me in the NFL. You never really get over that feeling. Even after you make it, they're always looking to replace you."

Once they've made it, sleepers say it's not the human spirit that keeps them going—it's fear. The fear of getting cut. The fear of someone bigger, faster, stronger and cheaper coming along and stealing everything they've worked for. "There's most definitely a paranoia," says Schlereth, who has endured 26 surgeries during his career. "That's another thing about being one of us. You never feel like you have a solid position. That goes with being undrafted or being a low-round pick. You have to earn every penny you've ever been paid. A lot of times you look at guys paid huge contracts and they haven't earned squat. They walk around like the cat's meow but they haven't played a snap. There's a certain amount of pride involved because nobody gave me anything. I've earned everything I've gotten."

At least Schlereth was drafted. That's more than Oronde Gadsden can say. He played at a cigarette factory—Winston-Salem—instead of a football factory. He was cut twice by Dallas and another time by Pittsburgh, but was too stubborn to take the hint. Five years into a career going nowhere, he was playing linebacker/wide receiver in the Arena League, where players' faces should be on milk cartons, not trading cards.

It's a long journey from the Portland Forest Dragons to the Miami Dolphins, but Gadsden made it and has turned into perhaps the Dolphins' most consistent wide receiver. He caught 48 passes for 713 yards and seven touchdowns in 1998, and followed it up with 48 catches for 803 yards and six touchdowns. The next item on his agenda? Blinking comes to mind. It seems the long journey has been more like a whirlwind tour. Hmmm, maybe that's why Gadsden made it. He hasn't had time to sit back and figure out he has no business being in the NFL.

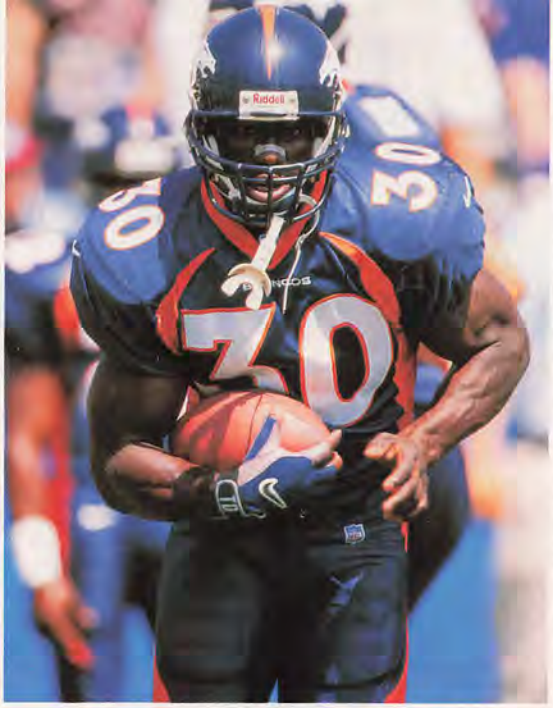
"You've got to show the coaches something right away," says Mark Schlereth about players like himself and Oronde Gadsden.

PAUL JASIENSKI; OTTO GRUELE/ALLSPORT

"I played my last Arena League game on a Saturday night in New Jersey, and I was in Dolphins' training camp Monday morning for two-a-days," says Gadsden. "It was pretty hectic. I think the reason I made it is because I had just played 15 games. I was in game condition and the other guys were just starting out. The odds were all working against me, but I was a step ahead physically. I always knew I could play, but sometimes you need a break."

Theoretically, there aren't supposed to be any breaks in the NFL. The most talented players make it, and the others teach Phys Ed after their 15 minutes of fame as camp fodder. The NFL's dragnet of scouts and personnel directors make sure the script goes as planned by sniffing out talent from coast to coast and Division I-A to Division III. Fact is, now, more than ever, it's tougher for sleepers to make it in the league. Some never get discovered because of the 80-man roster limits in training camp. Others fall victim to the impatience that permeates every coaching staff in the league. Then there's the matter of free agency. Since teams these days can address their needs in the off-season, there are fewer jobs available in training camp. It's a system designed to identify the best players and ensure they make the roster.

So how is it that so many sleepers are able to buck the system? How do so many range balls land in the same bag with all those Titleists? Check out the past two MVP winners. Warner played at Northern Iowa, the Arena League and NFL Europe before hitting it big. Terrell Davis began his college career at Long Beach State, which disbanded its program while he was in school, and barely played at Georgia before being drafted in the sixth round. Then check out the past two Super Bowl winners. The Rams had 19 undrafted players. The Broncos' offense, the one that dominated the league in 1997-98, had one first-rounder, Elway. His offensive line included two undrafted free agents, a seventh-rounder and Schlereth, a 10th-rounder.



Terrell Davis rose from playing on a disbanded college team to being the league MVP on the Super Bowl champs.

How do so many players given so little a chance make it? Largely, it's a matter of time and money. For all the millions that teams spend scouting players, they can't track every player at every school. Small schools typically have marginal, undersized athletes on their rosters, but not always. There are any number of reasons why players land at small schools. They might be too small to fit the Division I-A profile. Tuggle, for instance, weighed 185 pounds coming out of high school. Or they might have had bad grades. Shannon Sharpe had offers from several I-A programs, but landed at Savannah (Ga.) State, where he graduated, in his own immortal words, "thank you Lawdy."

It's not just the small-school players, though, who get overlooked. If a player from a big school isn't starting by his junior year, he starts falling off scouts' lists. Or if he sustains a major injury, as Jurkovic did, he falls behind other prospects. And if a player transfers, as Davis did, it's almost a given that his name will be reduced to fine print, if not misplaced on scouting reports.

"There's just not enough time," says Sundquist. "You have three months, from September to November, to see players. You'd better make sure you're tracking everything going on at Georgia before you check out the small schools. Believe me, if a small-school guy ran a 4.32 40, we'd know about it. It would spread like wildfire among the scouts. But you can't be on top of every player. There are just too many of them."

How many? From Division I-A to Division III, there are approximately 10,000 draft-eligible players a year. From that 10,000, there are, by Sundquist's estimate, 700-800 worthy of being evaluated. Out of that 700-800, only about 200 get drafted. That's 200 out of 10,000. That leaves roughly 9,800 chances to make a mistake.

"Even though we do everything we can, it's very easy to miss one or two," says Sundquist. "I wonder about all the guys through the years who might have made it if they had gotten the chance. That's the great Monday morning question. How many guys might have been great players, but never got the right opportunity? I'll bet there's a bunch." ■

Sport's NFL ALL-SLEEPER TEAM

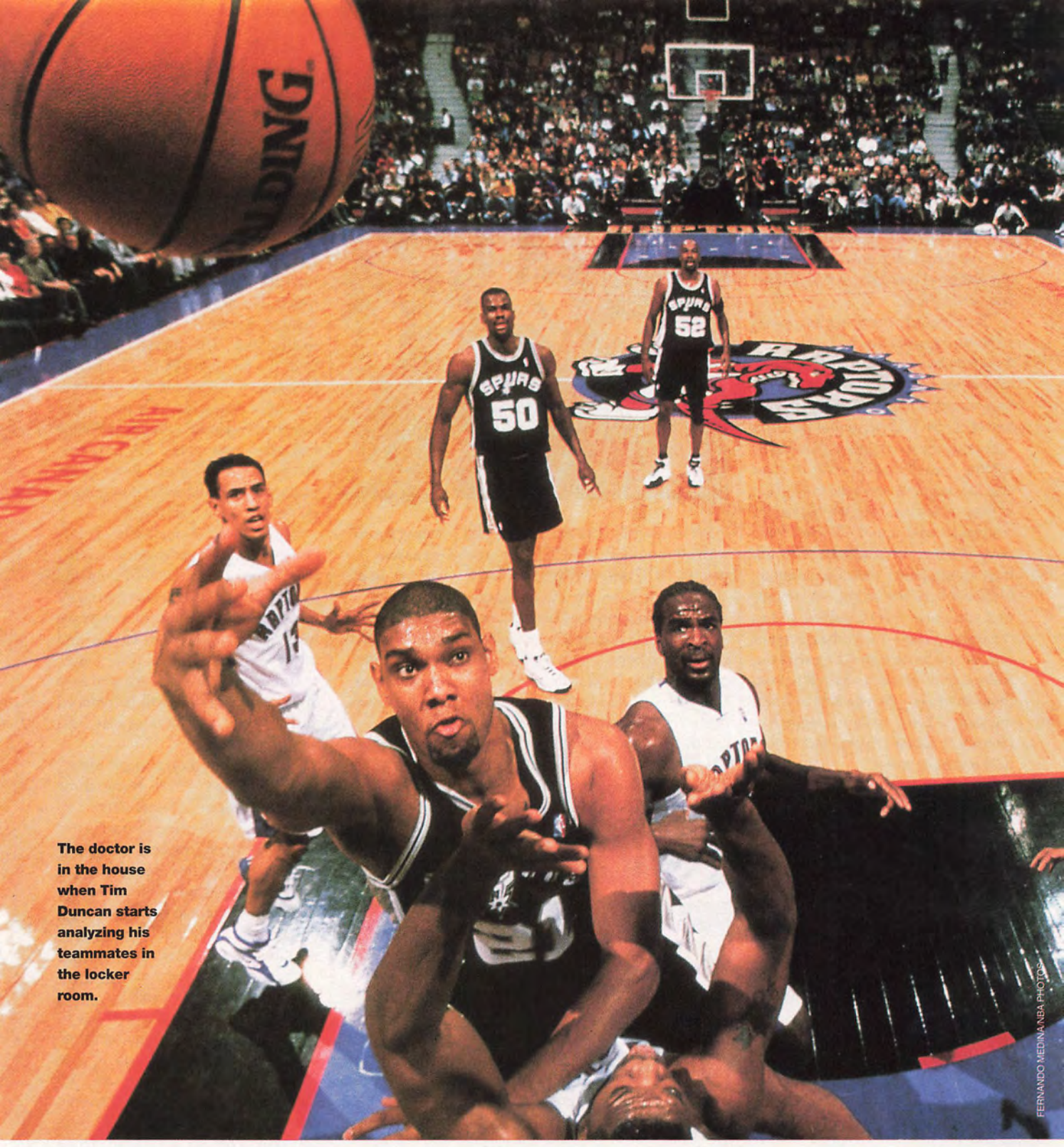
OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER/TEAM	SPORT REPORT
LT	**John Jackson,** San Diego	10th-rounder by Steelers in '88
LG	**Mark Schlereth,** Denver	First Alaska native ever drafted
C	**Mike Gruttadauria,** Arizona	Undrafted free agent to Super Bowl starter with the Rams
RG	**Adam Timmerman,** St. Louis	Just another Pro Bowler from South Dakota State
RT	**Tony Jones,** Denver	Undrafted free agent starting his 13th season
TE	**Shannon Sharpe,** Baltimore	Graduated "thank you Lawdy" from Savannah (Ga.) State
WR	**Keenan McCardell,** Jacksonville	One of the few 12th-rounders still around
WR	**Wayne Chrebet,** N.Y. Jets	Hofstra? Are you kiddin' me?
QB	**Kurt Warner,** St. Louis	If the light is just right, even looks like Roy Hobbs
HB	**Terrell Davis,** Denver	What was Ray Goff thinking not playing this guy?
FB	**Sam Gash,** Buffalo	Eighth-rounder during the Bush administration

DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER/TEAM	SPORT REPORT
LE	**Leon Lett,** Dallas	Only drugs have slowed down this seventh-rounder
LT	**Tony Siragusa,** Baltimore	For an undrafted free agent, the big lug can play
RT	**John Randle,** Minnesota	Future Hall of Famer wasn't even drafted
RE	**Michael Sinclair,** Seattle	Eastern New Mexico? Yeah, right
OLB	**Bryce Paup,** Jacksonville	Played at Northern Iowa, Kurt Warner's school
MLB	**Jessie Tuggle,** Atlanta	5-11, 230 pounds of attitude
OLB	**George Koonce,** Green Bay	Another of Ron Wolf's discoveries
FS	**Eugene Robinson,** Atlanta	Quick, name another NFL player from Colgate
SS	**Blaine Bishop,** Tennessee	That 5-9 he's listed at might be stretching it
LCB	**Doug Evans,** Carolina	Best DB on Packers' Super Bowl-champion team
RCB	**Willie Williams,** Seattle	Went to Western Carolina, not North Carolina

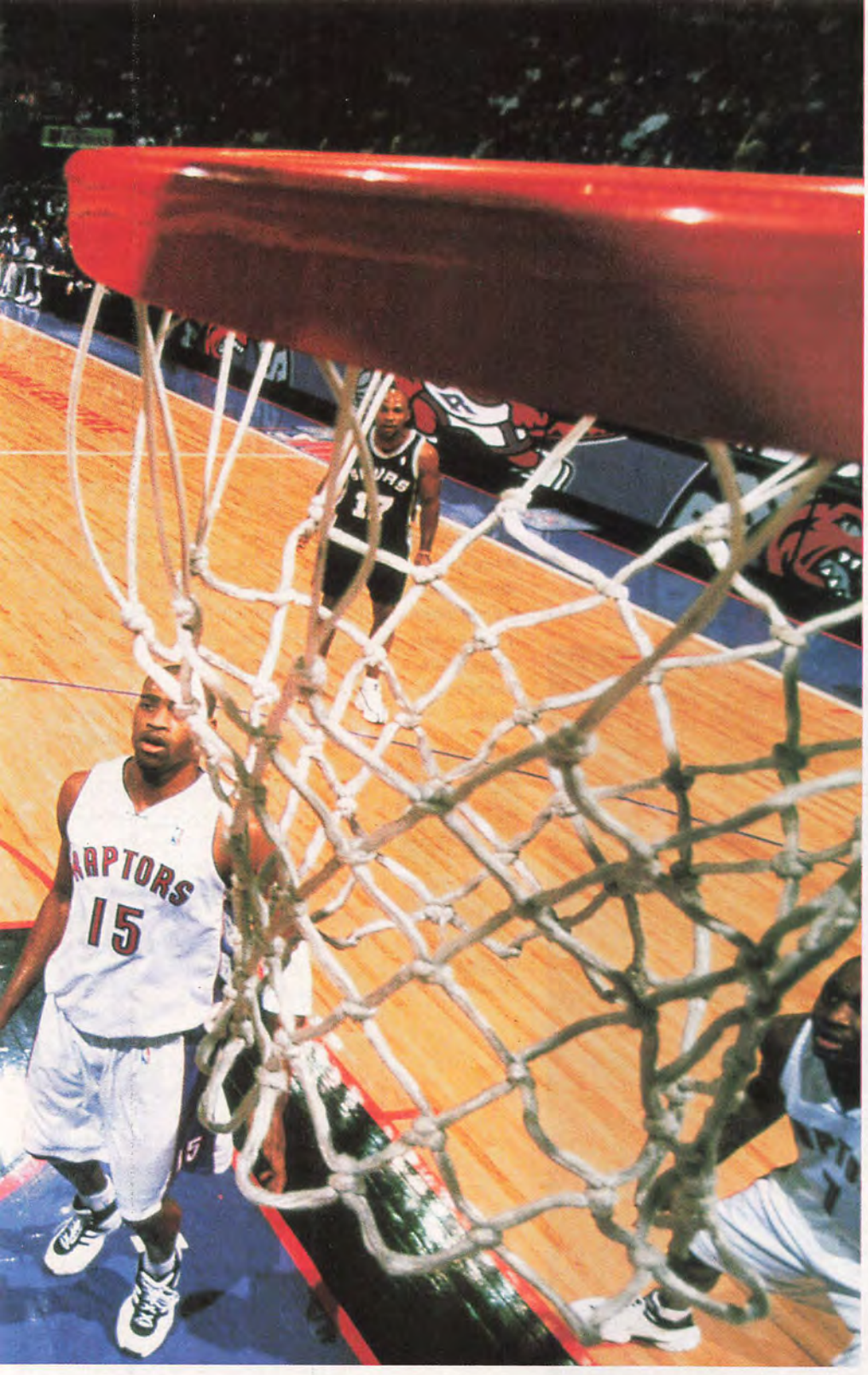
RICH KANE



The doctor is in the house when Tim Duncan starts analyzing his teammates in the locker room.

FERNANDO MEDINA/NBA PHOTOS

Behind Closed



Doors

The Secret to the Defending Champion San Antonio Spurs' Success Is Surprisingly Simple > By Darryl Howerton

"When nothing seems to help, I go and look at the stonecutter hammering away at his rock, perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the 101st blow, it will split in two, and I know it was not that blow that did it, but all that had been done before."

–Jacob Riis

IT IS A SMALL LOCKER ROOM, PERHAPS the smallest locker room in all of sports. The room, from floor to ceiling, is 12 feet high, with each locker stall measuring no more than 40 inches wide apiece. The lockers are stacked up against one another, and if that weren't bad enough, the design of the room is circular, making what would be a compact room downright claustrophobic. Thank God it will only be around for one more season, when the team that occupies it moves into a new arena.

It may actually be the worst locker room in pro sports. The only thing that gives the room any character (and, no, it is not those teal walls) is the sign with 20th-century author Jacob Riis' words posted above one of the exits. The quote is meant to symbolize how the occupants of this locker room grind on their opponents until their foes eventually crack under pressure.

The room's silence is shattered once the players from the defending NBA champion San Antonio Spurs begin to filter in after the final horn sounds out in the arena. This hasn't been a championship-type season for the southwest Texas team, what with

the Lakers and Trail Blazers having the best record for most of the year, but you wouldn't know it from their attitude. Confidence, bravado and laughter loudly reverberate off the acoustical cylinder, especially after tonight's resounding 24-point win over the Rockets. How ironic is it that this room without character is suddenly overrun with an overabundance of unlikely characters?

Everybody's All-Star forward Tim Duncan walks in and slaps Mario Elie on the back of the head while the gruff 36-year-old is attempting to complete an interview ("That's my boy," says Elie). Next to them, Avery Johnson is sermonizing on who-knows-what, but everyone in earshot is cracking up with each high-pitched phrase that comes out of the king of enunciation's mouth ("What's A.J. talking about now?" asks a Spur in the hidden-from-sight training room).

David Robinson, The Admiral, probably is sporting the biggest smile of the bunch tonight, even though he is nursing a bad shoulder that momentarily floored him. The big man's smile is enhanced when he glances at the stat sheet and notices that he was credited with seven steals in tonight's game, a fact that now places him as the Spurs' all-time steals leader.

"Seven steals?" screams Duncan from 30 feet across the room, just noticing Robinson's numbers on his own stat sheet. "Now I see how you broke the all-time record here."

"Don't you start talking, Tim," says Robinson, "or I'll have to bring up last week when you got your eight steals." The slender 7-1 specimen then turns to his audience and says, "The ball just bounced off his head last week, and he got a steal for it."

"That was a legitimate steal," says Duncan. "My head was positioned in the passing lane."

"I don't think I've ever seen a game, Tim, where you legitimately had more than two steals. This season they're just giving you stats."

"Come on."

"What, Tim? Am I missing something? Are you just taking the ball from people now?"

"That's right, I'm taking it from people."

"Yeah, okay, okay. I'll just say, after tonight, justice was served."

"And I see it differently," says Duncan, laughing. Then, just like any sibling would, he fires off one more shot, just so he can have the last word. "Cry and roll around on the floor like your shoulder is hurt, just so they start giving you steals."

Robinson laughs, shaking his head at the antagonism he routinely receives from the man 10 years his junior. He throws on a stylish jacket to match his pants, shoes, shirt and tie, and exits the compact locker room, as a fashion-ad-come-to-life.

As Robinson enters the overly spacious Alamodome, the 34-year-old receives a Backstreet Boys-like ovation from the 8,000 or so screaming teenagers who've stuck around for an hour after the game to hear the Spurs' greatest thief—and its minister of goodwill—preach to the faithful. Not your typical postgame party, but interesting nonetheless.

"Here's what Avery and I talk about all the time," Robinson tells the crowd. "We say we're not gonna get discouraged about what we see. We're gonna keep pressing. Gonna keep going. Because when you love God, when you pour yourself out to him, I guarantee God will bring the good life to you. Don't lose sight of the vision God has for you because God is faithful. As long as you fight the good fight, you'll see God working. I see it in this locker room every day."

THE GOOD FIGHT. THE TEENS CHEER, but are unaware that the Spurs locker room had plenty of fight in it not 72 hours earlier following a loss in Cleveland, and not the kind that generally brings teams together. It seems the fiery Johnson, frustrated perhaps with his team's lackluster effort in the

David Robinson and Mario Elie shoot from the hip when it comes to keeping the locker room loose.

D.CLARKE EVANS/NBA PHOTOS; INSET: TOM HAUCK/ALLSPORT

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Former Air Force captain Gregg Popovich commands the Spurs' complete attention.

first game following the All-Star break, went ballistic after the 11-point loss and not only trashed the locker room, but took a swing at, of all people, Malik Rose. Who knows? Johnson might have been upset about a fourth-quarter benching (Terry Porter and Antonio Daniels had both been seeing increased minutes at point guard), his contract status (he reportedly wants a three-year, $24 million deal this summer) or a glare from Rose during the game when Cavalier Andre Miller beat Johnson off the dribble.

Whatever the reasons, news of the locker room fight didn't initially leak out because of "The Code." The locker room code. In the sports world, this room is often given sanctuary-type status because of its importance in keeping teams together. "What goes on here, stays here" is the mantra. Temper tantrums, outbursts of anger and, yes, even scuffles will take place in the course of 16-, 82- and 162-game seasons in the sports world. But to break the locker room's unwritten code—ratting out your fellow teammate—is often an unpardonable sin among players and coaches.

So a Spurs leader had a scuffle? Big deal; it makes him human. But this team's ability to forgive, forget and move on—not to mention, keep out of the headlines for the most part—is what keeps them a step above the rest. Not always one big happy family, mind you, but always a family to the end. For they realize they will not be defined by the bumps along the road, but only by where that road eventually takes them. It is this reason and this attitude that perhaps makes this collection of characters the best locker room in sports today.

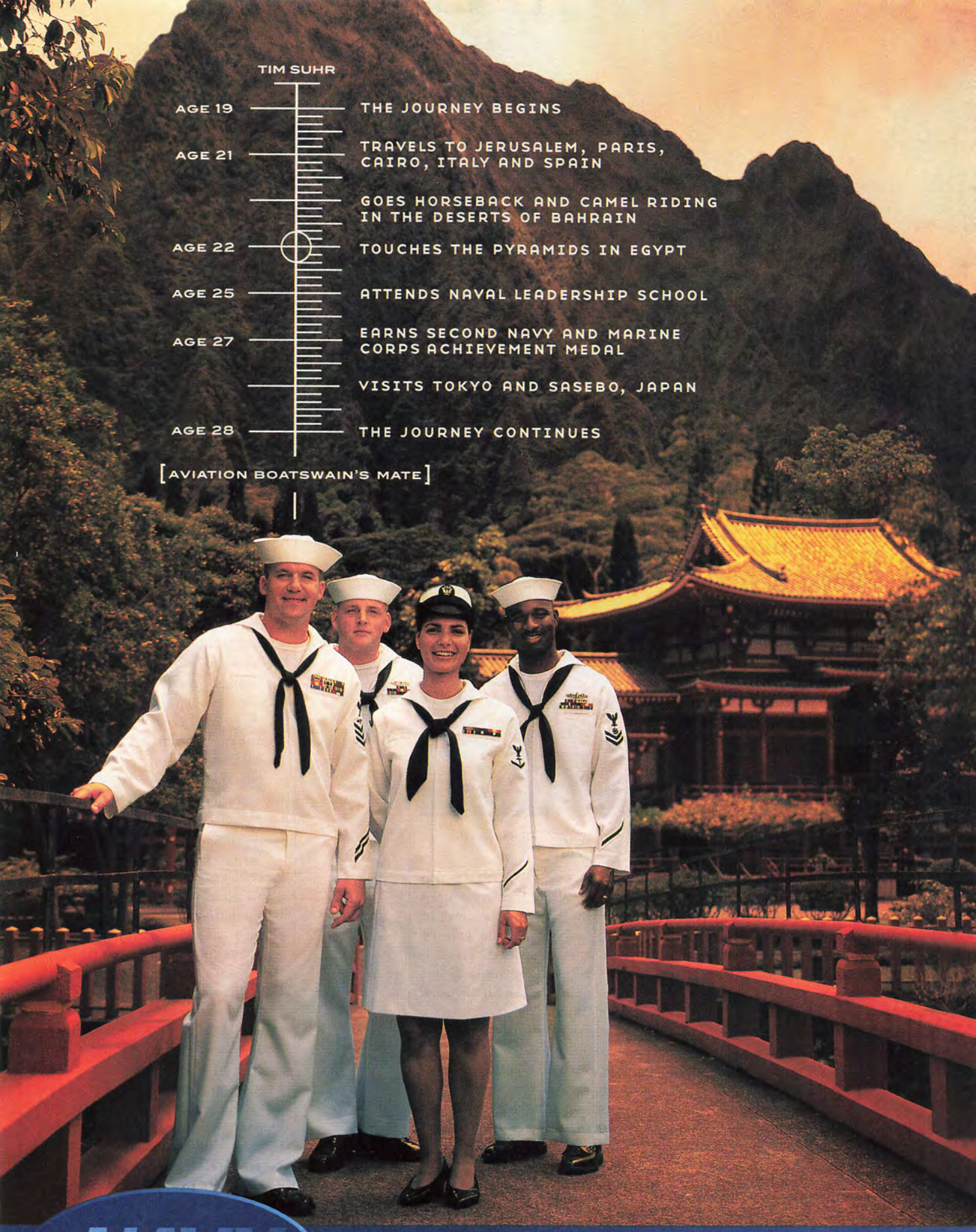
Who knows exactly why they are the way they are? Maybe, as Robinson says, it is because of the presence of God. Maybe, as coach Gregg Popovich says, it is because the team only acquires players of a certain character (all but Samaki Walker left college as seniors, and Walker intends to go back for his degree this summer). Maybe, as Elie says, it is because of the team's intellect (10 have degrees, an unofficial league high). Maybe, as Steve Kerr says, it is because of the maturity (nine have been in the NBA for at least 10 years), and all the family men on the team ("You've never seen more kids in a locker room or kids traveling on a road trip than you do here," says Kerr.). Maybe, as Terry Porter says, it is because of the laid-back off-court attitude combined with the stonefaced on-court demeanor ("It's not intense all the time like it was in Miami."). Maybe, as Antonio Daniels, says, it is because of the team's sense of humor ("People are always cracking jokes on people, just like any family would.").

Whatever the reason, when unofficial surveys are done with unbiased souls throughout the league, the majority rank the Spurs locker room as the best. Just ask any media member tracking down quotes. Just ask any fan, any autograph-seeker, about which team—not to mention, championship team—is the most accommodating to the public. Just ask any Spur who has been part of other NBA locker rooms.

Kerr, who played with the championship Bulls teams along with three others, says, "Top to bottom, I don't think I've ever seen a team that got along better with the media and with the fans. I can't think of a single incident in the two years I've been here where a player got into any kind of trouble, whether it was with the law or with a fan or just bad P.R. of any sort. I mean, nothing. And that's very rare."

"When I was with the old Rockets," says Elie, "me, Vernon [Maxwell] and Sam [Cassell] would be in the back of the plane, gambling, rolling dice, playing blackjack, trying to win some money. When you get on the plane with the Spurs, you've got to come with your laptop computer. It's a smart team that handles its business, whether

GLENN JAMES/NBA PHOTOS



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they're playing computer games, Scrabble or just writing e-mail letters."

When an incident like the one in Cleveland goes down, it doesn't destroy the team, although the potential is there. The veterans on the team—Robinson, Sean Elliott, Porter, Elie—know how not to let the bad overwhelm the goodwill that has been built up in that locker room over the years. It is an attitude that filters down to the young Spurs as well.

"What happens in our house is in our house," says Duncan, a third-year Spur. "I think we're all professional enough to know it's our locker room, and we handle our own business. That's how it is. Little things like that can really hurt the chemistry of the team. We handle the things that happen within our team. We don't need somebody else blowing it up and making something really bigger than they are. We're all veterans. We're all really smart with what we do, we know what the major goal is. We don't need a little pimple or little eruption changing anything we do."

Regardless, the Avery Johnson incident went unreported at the time because Popovich threw up a smokescreen saying he was the one who went crazy, and then explained a cut above his nose by saying he "must've ran into a chalkboard or something." The 51-year-old Popovich, a former Air Force captain who also did special-intelligence work in the military, knows a thing or two about keeping the peace and closing ranks. Before the locker room was opened to the media, Popovich got the Spurs together on the official version of what transpired.

The Spurs and Avery Johnson had the last laugh last year after winning the NBA title.

A few days later, the head coach made phone calls to the main parties to alert them that "there's a leak in the ship," and the media may be aware of what happened. Then as Johnson, who made himself less accessible than normal, finally faced up to the "rumors," Popovich made sure he was within earshot as he listened to the muscular 5-11, 180-pound point guard go into spin-doctor mode, saying, "Another inaccurate story, and what goes on in our locker room is our business. What happens in the locker room, stays in the locker room. That's what we've been successful at. I think that's why they close locker rooms in certain situations." And then, trying to inject some humor in the situation, Johnson added, "If the Coyote [the Spurs mascot] comes in our locker room and tries to tear it up again, because he's mad about a loss, I'm gonna get on the Coyote."

When pressed again, Johnson turned silent, and simply said, "Next question."

THE SPURS ARE PROUD OF THEIR REPutation for being called boring, knowing that nothing could be farther from the truth, while also realizing that image helps keep the media at bay. In reality, they are boring like Mozart is boring, like a perfect sunset is boring. They are only boring to the fast-food junkies who don't take the time to savor a good team when they have one set before them. Anyone who sits back and takes in this team eventually realizes, like a fine wine, this team's story just gets better with age.

If anything, it is the most eclectic bunch of minds in NBA team history and one that should be savored. What other NBA team nowadays has 10 college graduates? What other team has a Montblanc de la Culture Award winner (Robinson), a *USA Weekend* Most Caring Athlete Award winner (Johnson), a Boys and Girls Club Hall of Famer (Porter), a college textbook co-author (Duncan), two kidney transplant survivors (Elliott and Rose) and a team that does more charity work than most charitable organizations.

No, they may not be MTV, but they are most certainly CNN, The Learning Channel and C-SPAN all in one package.

Where else can you go see the locker-room brawler one week later also leading his team in pre-game prayer in that same sanctuary? Where else can you see a pop psychologist give you glimpses into the mind of the team's resident genius. ("If David's favorite movie is *The Little Mermaid*, and mine is *The Crow*," theorizes Duncan, "that should tell you that he's a little fruity and I'm a little sick."). What other organization is as forgiving, pursuing Latrell Sprewell in a proposed trade a year ago after the famous coach-choking incident, and then earlier this year signing the fired coach, P.J. Carlesimo, as the team's TV color analyst?

Where else, but deep in the heart of the Alamodome? In that dingy, lousy, cramped little locker room, which just may be the best locker room in all of sports. ■

FROM TOP: M.DAVID LEEDS/ALLSPORT; JED JACOBSOHN/ALLSPORT

TJ Lavin doesn't have to worry about staying dry.

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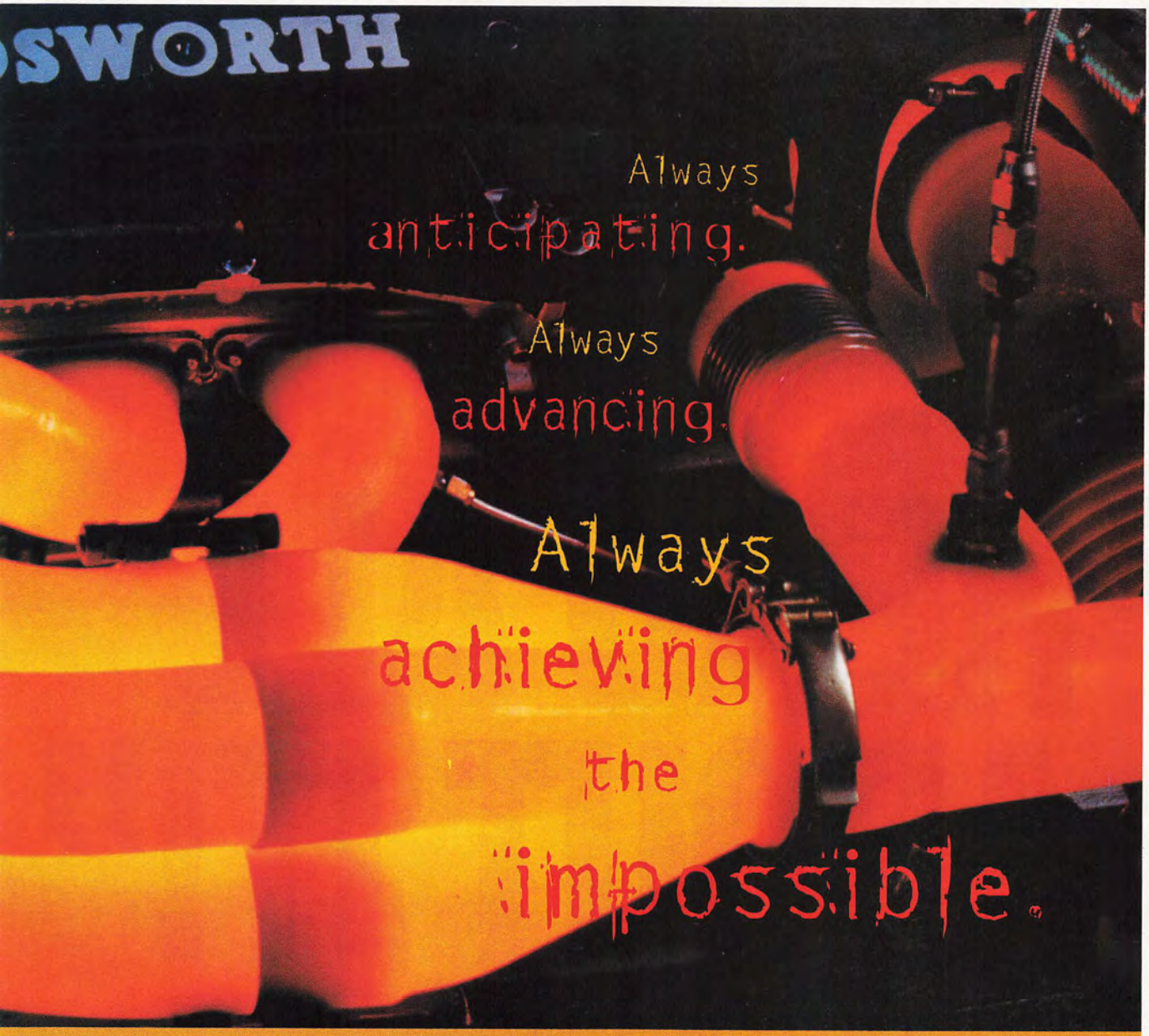

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The Life-Altering Impact of the Daily Sports Transactions Goes Far Beyond What's Seen On a Line of Small Print > By Mat Edelson

FORGET THE HEADLINES. IGNORE THE NOTES. BYPASS THE SCORES. BLOW OFF THE FEATURES. FOR THE TRULY discerning sports fan—and for any athlete who realizes that, in the end, he's nothing more than a temporarily employed independent contractor—there's only one place in the daily sports section with news they can really use. It's usually miles from page one, stuck somewhere between the bass fishing report and tire ads, in type so tiny that Pop needs an extra foot on his arms just to bring the words into focus.

It's commonly called the transactions section. We at SPORT call it a treasure trove of untold tales. Couched in the euphemisms that conveniently strip emotion from any business decision ("Optioned" really means "Sent packing"), it's easy to see the transactions as nothing more than the sports ticker. But they're more like a Cliffs Notes on the human condition, for in that tiny sentence a life has been shaken not just stirred. Suspensions, promotions, rejections, elections, resignations, reassignations ... all fit neatly under a cereal bowl.

SPORT decided to take a look at a day in the life of the transactions, and see how those oh-so-briefly mentioned have been impacted over the past year. We picked April 13, 1999, a particularly ripe day for transactions (58 in all, including five college tennis players disciplined by the Ohio Valley Conference for somehow getting into a brawl during a match). More powerful than an e-mail, reaching every small town in America, the transaction section is the hardest journalistic puncher on the sports page. That's because every transaction tells a story. Here are a few.

BASEBALL

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Texas Rangers: Purchased P Jeff Zimmerman from Oklahoma of the Pacific Coast League

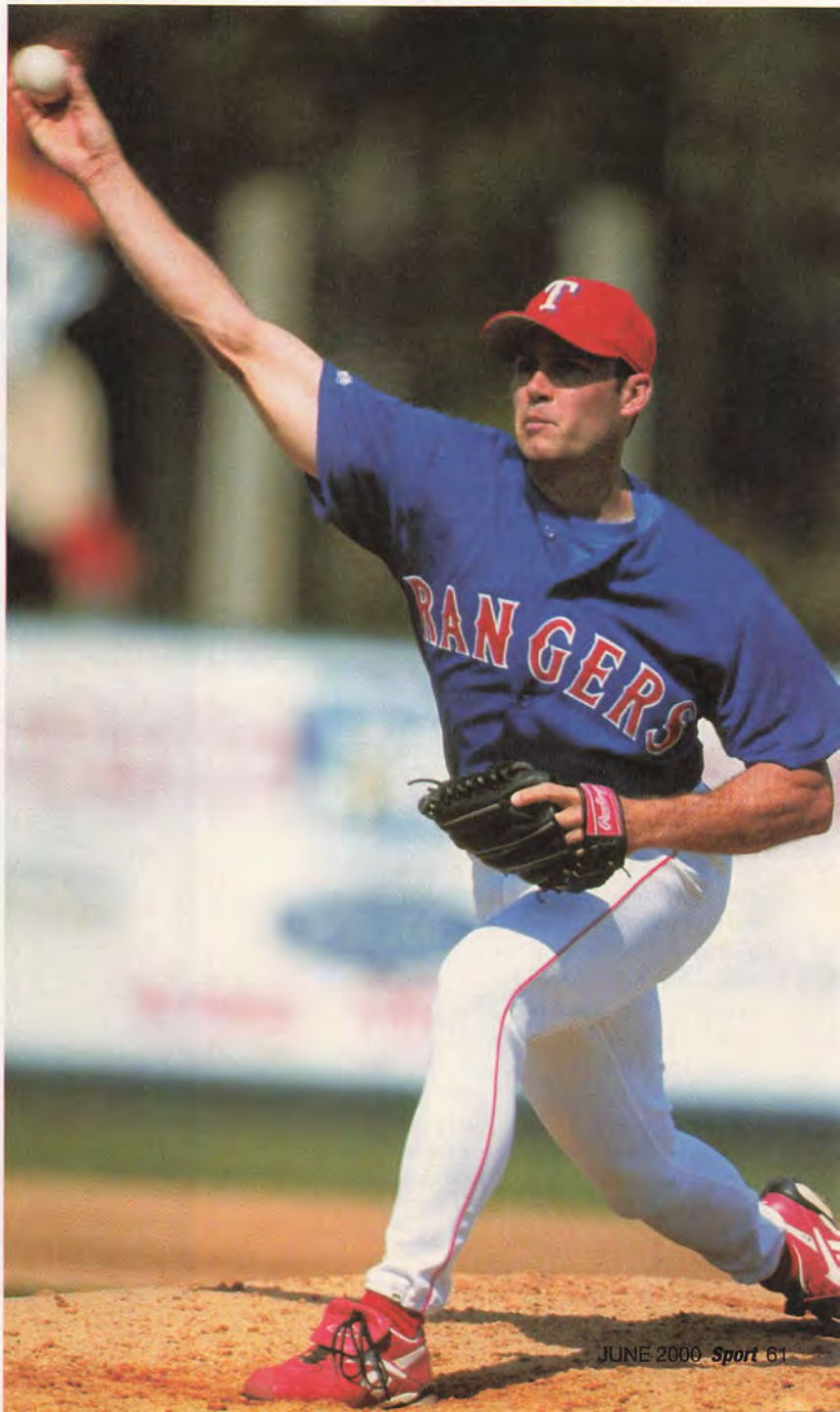
If it weren't for the transactions, Jeff Zimmerman wouldn't have known he'd gotten his first big break in 1998. "Actually, it's quite funny," recalls Zimmerman, now preparing for his first opening-day in the majors. "I didn't realize Texas actually signed me until my dad read the transaction in *The Houston Chronicle*. He called me up and said, 'Congratulations.' 'On what?' 'I just read in the transactions page that the Rangers [minor-league team] bought your contract from Winnipeg [where Zimmerman was playing in the independent Northern League].' 'Really? I haven't heard anything from the Rangers or Winnipeg.'

"'Well,' said Mr. Zimmerman, as if quoting from scripture, 'it's in the transactions page, so it must have happened.' "

If Zimmerman, Jr., seemed skeptical, consider that his journey to the show was as arduous and unchartered as a Lewis & Clark expedition. From Canadian high school ball to Texas Christian University, back to Team Canada, across to France. Zimmerman could order wine in three languages, but couldn't buy a look-see from a major-league scout. Not even with a slider as biting as a maitre d's wit.

In the end, it wasn't Zimmerman's ERA that earned him a shot. It was his MBA. The kid wrote a mean résumé. He'd sent some 300 to prospective employers in the "real" world of finance. What was 30 more to major-league GMs? "I told them I was a 25-year-old pitcher from Canada who had basically fallen through the cracks, hadn't thrown in front of many scouts ... a late-bloomer, slow-developer guy, and I felt my best years were ahead of me."

Looking at his '97 Winnipeg record (league leader in ERA, second in strikeouts), Texas was hooked. In a year, Zimmerman zoomed through their minors, holding Single- and Double-A opponents to a .175 aver-



Texas' Jeff Zimmerman started last season in Triple-A but by mid-July he became the third middle reliever ever selected to an All-Star game.

ON APRIL 13, 1999 ...

Philadelphia 76ers: Placed F **George Lynch** on the injured list with a sprained medial collateral ligament in his right knee. Activated F Rick Mahorn from the injured list.

A YEAR LATER ...

Lynch is healthy and back in the 76ers' starting lineup. Mahorn has since retired and spent the 2000 season as coach of the CBA Rockford Lightning.

FROM LEFT: NOREN TROTMAN/NBA PHOTOS; JED JACOBSON/ALLSPORT

age. He was slated for Triple-A in '99, but lasted only 10 days there. On April 12, after a road game in Albuquerque, Oklahoma manager Greg Biagini asked Zimmerman into his office. That's where Zimmerman's second big break came. "I was chewing on a roast beef sandwich, barbecue sauce just dripping down my chin. My mouth was full. They told me I was getting called up to the big leagues. I almost spit my food on his desk. It wasn't a very pretty, poignant scene," laughs Zimmerman.

Zimmerman struck out the first two pros he faced and never looked back. At one point he was an outrageous 8-0 with an 0.83 ERA as the Rangers' long man. His rise was so stunning, his tale so captivating, that Zimmerman became only the third middle reliever in history elected to the All-Star game (Darold Knowles and Mike Henneman were the others). "It was scary. If I didn't have John Wetteland there with me, I wouldn't have had the guts to walk in the clubhouse door and introduce myself to everyone." There was no need, for the players already recognized the face behind the gifted arm. Ken Griffey rubbed a paw on Zimmerman's chest, hoping to bring back some good fortune to Jordan Zimmerman, Jeff's brother in the Seattle system. "It blew me away that these guys knew who I was," he says.

And nobody took more pride in Zimmerman's call-up than his parents. In her British Columbia tavern, mom Sharon was considered the town heretic, pushing baseball on the TV over hockey. When Jeff called her at 2 a.m. to tell her he'd made The Show, "she just started crying, she was so excited for me." Jeff's dad, drained by chemotherapy as he battled lymphoma in Texas was, as usual, to the point. "He just told me he was very, very proud of me, and I deserved to be there. He told me he loved me, showed me his pride."

Now that he's the pride of Arlington as well, Zimmerman hopes to stay in Texas and out of the transactions pages for a while. A year after his last appearance there, with a trip to the Mid-Summer classic and postseason playoffs under his belt, Zimmerman's amazed at how much life has changed.

"Absolutely," he laughs. "It's gone head over heels."

BASKETBALL

NBA

Philadelphia 76ers: Activated F Rick Mahorn from the injured list

Yes, that Rick Mahorn. No doubt readers of this tidbit did a double-take. Jeez. That dude's still playing? Nobody was more surprised than Mahorn himself, who didn't even learn to make a left-handed layup until his first year at tiny Hampton (Va.) University. Twenty years in the NBA? Hell, Mahorn was tickled he made 20 weeks. "I didn't realize I was a pro in the NBA until like my third or fourth year. I was in San Francisco visiting a girlfriend of mine at the time, and I was reading in their paper about myself," he laughs. "You never know."

What Mahorn did know was, coming off foot surgery at age 40, his NBA career was definitely on day-to-day footing. The infamous bruiser of Detroit's bad boy championship team, Mahorn had once been both a sports verb—as in, "You weren't crushed by that pick, baby, you were Mahorned"—as well as pop icon. A book reviewer in *The Nation* described a fictional brutish hispanic convict as "that third-cell-from-the-end type nobody messes with who enforces lawlessness, a Latino Rick Mahorn." Those were Mahorn's glory days, a time that by 1999 was as faded as an old fax.

No matter. At heart Rick Mahorn was like that staple of the stage, the bit player enjoying success because he gladly adapts to new (though never starring) roles. Elder statesman? No problem. "Players like myself, Herb Williams, Eddie Johnson ... teams want people who can be a player-coach, but not necessarily the coach. You want a player in the trenches with those guys, who can explain what the coach is trying to say," says Mahorn. On the Sixers, Mahorn's pupils included Matt Geiger, Nazr Mohammed, Theo Ratliff, and another somewhat familiar face, Allen Iverson.

"I went to high school with Allen's mother," says Mahorn. "I felt like I was playing with my son." Still, with just a few months left in the '98-99 campaign, Mahorn sensed the Grim Reaper taking dead aim at his career. He'd kept that ghoul at bay by moving from New Jersey to Detroit to Philly during the end of the '90s, reasoning that NBA teams would tell him it was time to go. They did in the summer of 1999, promising only non-guaranteed contracts. "Hey, when

MITCHELL LAYTON/NEWSPORT PHOTOGRAPHY

ON APRIL 13, 1999 ...
Detroit Tigers: Optioned OF **Gabe Kapler** to Toledo of the International League.

A YEAR LATER ...
Kapler was later recalled to the majors and ultimately among several players traded to the Texas Rangers for Juan Gonzalez.

ROCKY WIDNER

ON APRIL 13, 1999 ...
Colorado Avalanche: Agreed to terms with F **Peter Forsberg** on a three-year contract extension.

A YEAR LATER ...
Forsberg remains the cornerstone of the Avs franchise.

they're offering that, I can't do that," says Mahorn. "My career and what I've done should guarantee me something. They're giving me a message: 'Hey, we're not going to bank on a 41-year-old guy.' "

Mahorn wasn't bitter, but he didn't exactly have a post-career direction. A role on the Sixers post-game telecast gave Mahorn work, but it was a former teammate who offered the power forward a new career. "I had dinner with Isiah [Thomas, the new owner of the CBA] in Detroit. He said, 'If you don't get picked up, give me a call.' " When Michael Jordan tabbed Rockford Lightning coach Darryl Walker to be the Wizards new coach, Mahorn moved into the coaching food chain. "I've been a coach for nine games, going on 10 tonight," chuckles Mahorn. "I'm enjoying it. It's kind of funny, 'cause when I walk around it's like, 'Coach?' And I've got to turn around to see who they're talking to. I can't get used to this 'Coach' thing."

He just might. Except for the suit and tie bit, the informal Mahorn sees a natural transition to his new role, a sharing of a generation's worth of professional basketball knowledge. The mischievous Mahorn is still present, only now he has the rookies carry his VCR instead of lugging heavier baggage. "I haven't made them carry my bags. Yet." The fiery Mahorn has also returned, the one who bluntly told teammate and former missionary Shawn Bradley that "on the court it's war ... say some Hail Marys or whatever later."

"I'm old-school," Mahorn says proudly. "I had something happen up here and I brought the guys in my office. I said, 'I ain't got time for this s---. If you wanna do this s---, go elsewhere.' "

Not likely. With an emphasis on discipline and the aspects most likely to land a CBA'er an NBA job—defense and role-playing—Rick Mahorn is promoting his players' careers and hopefully his own. Is there one last transaction in his future? How 'bout under the heading "Hired" ... as an NBA head coach. "I would love to get to the NBA," he says. "I'm in a win-win situation here. I'm learning how to be a head coach and how to deal with people. And I've always been a people-person so half the battle's okay."

HOCKEY

AHL

League: Announced the Fredericton Canadiens will move to Quebec City for the 1999-2000 season and be renamed the Citadels

For as long as she can recall, Agnes McCarthy has lived and died with the transactions. They tell her which of her boys are going up, who is coming home, and who is going back to their real home ... for good. Others may have a hard time understanding Ag (as her friends call her), but in every minor league hockey burgh there's a lady like her—a mama hen fiercely proud and protective of her chicks.

At Fredericton games it was impossible to miss Ag unless you were deaf. One night the team urged fans to bring anything to the rink that created a racket. Passing the ticket-taker, Ag's husband was asked if he'd brought his noisemaker. Charlie McCarthy merely sighed. "I did," he told the usher. "My wife." Charlie and Ag had an agreement: He sat in the rafters in peace and quiet. Ag sat right next to the opponent's penalty box, cowbell and rubber fowl on a pole at the ready. She kept her invective against the enemy clean but cutting—"CHICKEN!"—even inciting a few to riot. "Rob Murray ... he's one of those guys I really got on to," jokes Agnes. "He had the most penalty minutes in the AHL. And he was interviewed down in the States. He said, 'I can't take all of the credit. I have to give some credit to Agnes.' "

It would be easy to dismiss Ag as a blowhard fan. It would also be a mistake. Throughout Fredericton's run she opened her heart and home to the

team. If Fredericton, by Ag's admission, treated the Canadiens like royalty, Chez McCarthy was their castle and Agnes their counselor. "I invited many, many into my home at Christmas. The team called me and said, 'Look, we've got two guys here who can't get home for Christmas. You got room for them too?' And I never, ever said no."

Her hospitality wasn't limited to holidays. A sure slump-stopper was a church dinner. ("They always wanted turkey," she giggles. "With lots of gravy.") Sure, Ag had her favorites—Donald Brashear, recently mauled by Marty McSorley, was one—but to McCarthy the team was the thing. She ran the booster club, organized the game night 50-50 raffle, in short, did everything in her power to keep the franchise healthy.

Alas, it was not. "When they're not filling the rink, you're gonna lose your team," she says. "If you filled the rink with 3,600 [capacity], you had a chance. But when you didn't .... " You lived on borrowed time. Midway through the '98-99 season the rumblings became roars. On April 12th during a home game, "It went mouth to mouth, around the rink like wild fire. 'They're leaving after the season,'" recalls McCarthy. "We didn't say anything to the players because we didn't want them to stop playing. We didn't know if they knew or not. I think we knew before they did."

The next day the roars became crushing reality. It was right there in the transactions: The Canadiens were gone. "Oh, we had a few tears. I did anyway," says Ag, dragging on a Players' Light cigarette. "I was very, very sad." There was one final going-away party, and player after player came up to Ag with a hug and an autographed puck. Suddenly, the nest was empty. Over the summer Ag didn't really notice. Heck, it wasn't hockey season anyway, and she had a men's senior baseball team she GM'd to keep her busy. But as the days grew shorter, McCarthy's heart started longing. My whole team is gone, she thought. What am I going to do now?

What she found was there was nothing to do. "This has been the most boring winter I have ever spent," says Ag. "I would give a million dollars to go to those games again. I tell you, I miss 'em. When they were gone on the road, you almost went stir crazy listening to 'em on the radio."

What's left is memories. Of opposing coaches sending her pizzas and love notes during games to keep her mouth and mind busy. Of friendships formed and followed from close and afar. Of the CBC's "Hockey Night in Canada," where it's 2-to-1 that Ag can turn on the TV and see a player she's had dinner with. She still follows the Canadiens—whoops, make that Citadels—but only through the media. "There was a couple going down. They were playing in St. John's, New Brunswick, only two hours away. They called and said, 'Ag, you want to go?' And I said 'I can't.' It broke my heart, really."

There could be bitterness, but Agnes McCarthy won't allow that. To the franchise and its players she wishes only the best. For a mother never forgets her children, no matter how far afield they wander. "Tell 'em I miss 'em all, love 'em all, and I'll keep one eye on them through the paper."

They know, Ag. They know.

JEFF CARLICK/ENDZONE

ON APRIL 13, 1999 ...
Dallas Cowboys: Signed QB **Troy Aikman** to a six-year contract extension; signed free agent C Mark Stepnoski, who had been with the Tennessee Titans, to a five-year contract.

A YEAR LATER ...
Aikman guided Dallas to an 8-8 record, which led to coach Chan Gailey being fired and replaced by longtime Cowboy assistant Dave Campo. Stepnoski saw his former team advance to the Super Bowl while Dallas failed to advance past the second round of the playoffs for the third straight season.

FOOTBALL

NFL

St. Louis Rams: Signed OL Andy McCollum

At heart Andy McCollum is a commodities trader. The only difference is, he *is* the commodity. As such,

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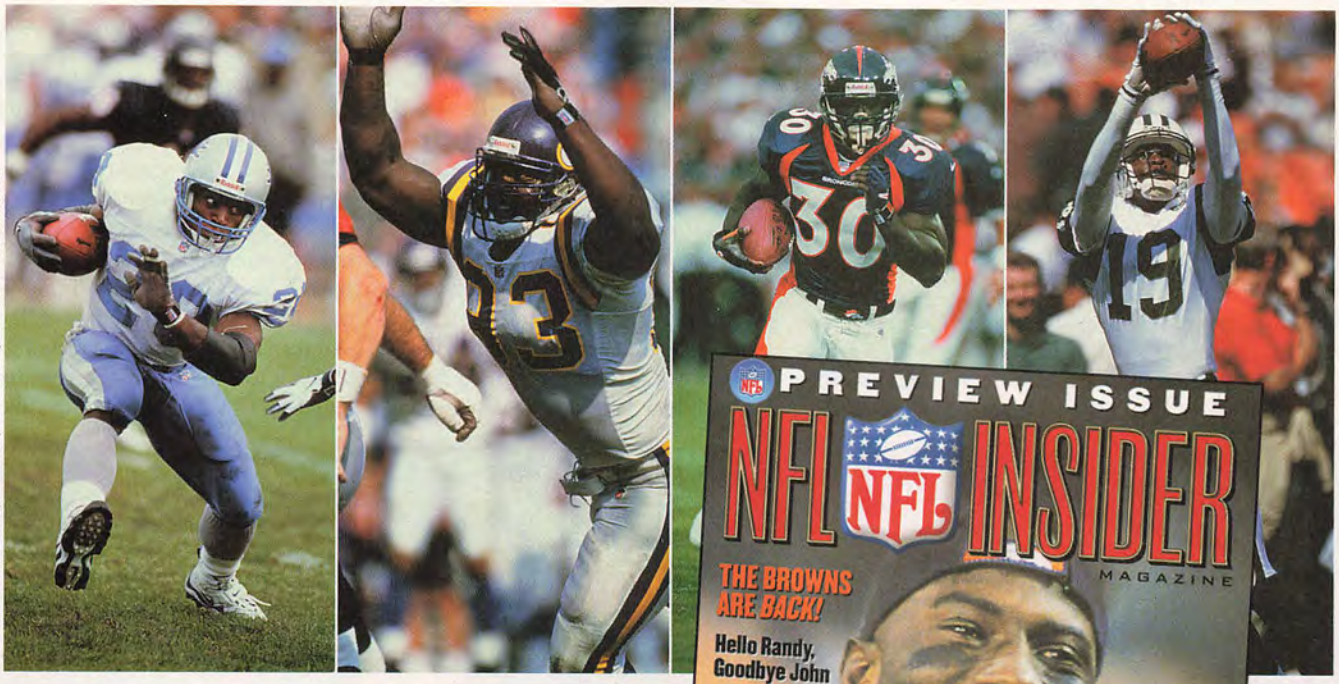
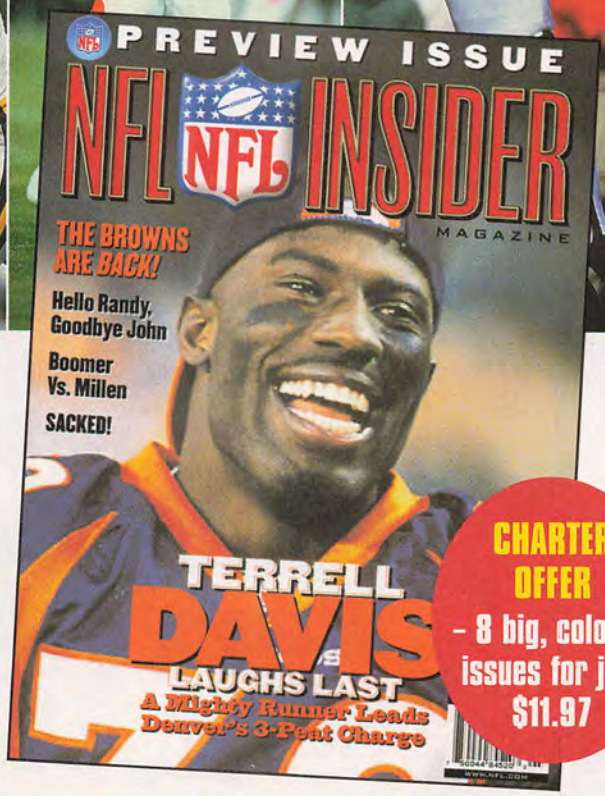


L-R: © TODD ROSENBERG, ALLEN KEE, DEE WELSCH, JON SOOHOO / NFL PHOTOS



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McCollum scours the transactions page the way a stock trader analyzes the Dow Jones: Somewhere amongst the minutiae lay opportunity. "I check it whenever I have a sports page in my hand," says McCollum, a sixth-year pro. "My wife checks that thing every day. As soon as the free agency period starts, you have some idea about what teams have needs where, and what teams have guys who are free, so you follow the other guys at your position. You see where they sign—'Oh, well, that team doesn't need a center, guard, anymore'—you also see 'Oh, this guy is off the market,' so if a team was interested in that guy, that team may now be more interested in you. So it keeps you up-to-date on the market, and hopefully the market's working for you."

Consider that McCollum knows a bit about market forces. Undrafted in 1993 out of tiny Toledo, McCollum spent an entire season working as a student assistant coach at the school while trying to scrounge an on-field job. "I made my own highlight tapes. Sent them to every team." In 1994, he suddenly became a hot property, going from the Arena League to the Browns practice squad to New Orleans' active roster in a matter of weeks. He flourished in the Big Easy, playing nearly every snap in '96 and '97 until a certain steely-eyed coach walked in the door and took away his starting job. "I kind of had some difficulties with the coaching staff Mike Ditka had there," McCollum says. "For some reason I wasn't one of their favorite guys."

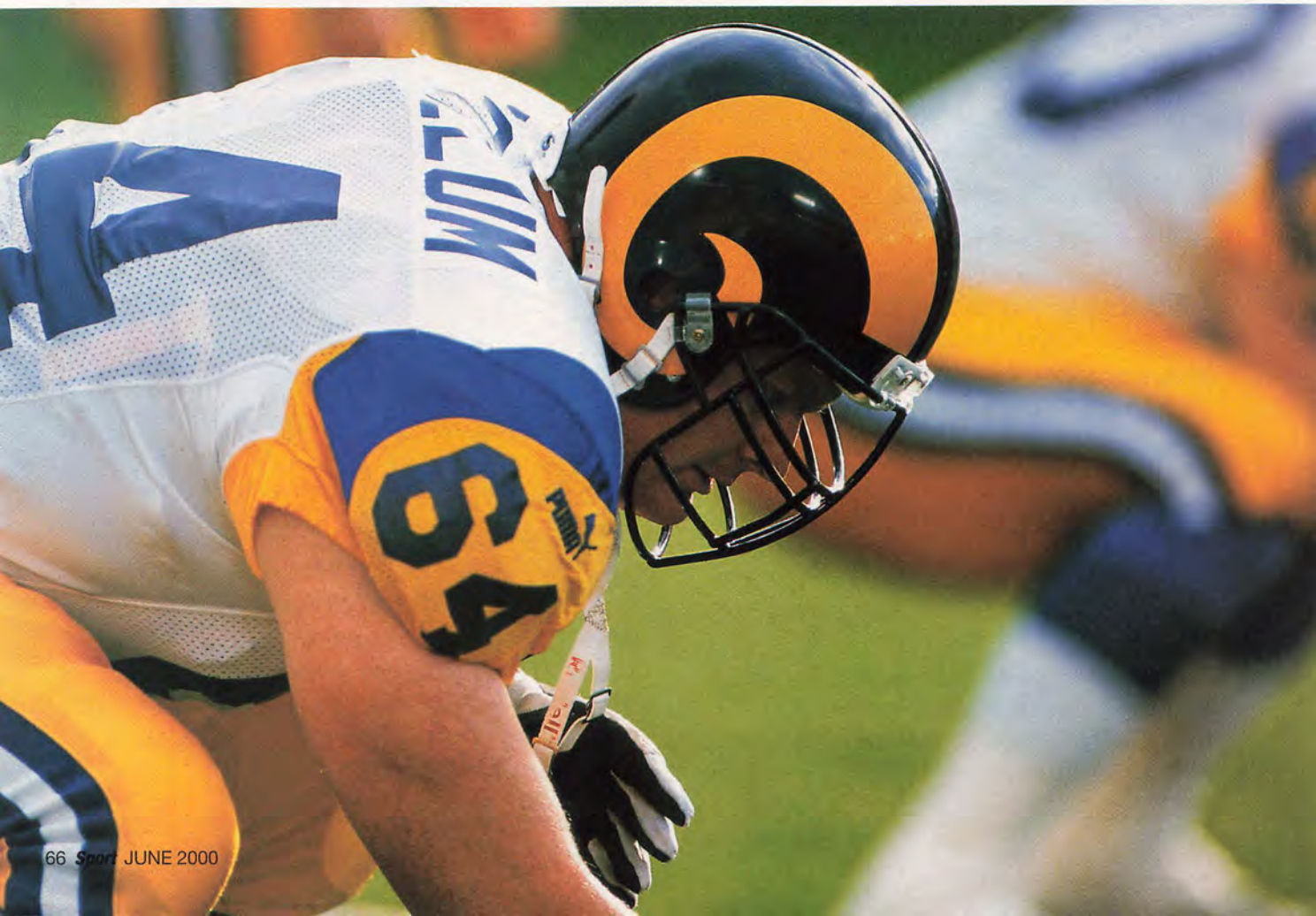
Andy McCollum played a hunch in signing with St. Louis prior to the '99 season when he also had an offer from Jacksonville all lined up.

In 1999, he took a flyer on a lightly regarded stock known as the St. Louis Rams. With an offer from blue-chipper Jacksonville also on the table, McCollum's friends thought he was a bit loopy, but he'd done his due diligence. The Saints played the Rams twice a year. McCollum saw an improving team, their 4-12 '98 record not withstanding. The fit felt right, even if coach Dick Vermeil was a tad, um, different. "It did catch me kind of funny when I first got there," says McCollum. "He was always breaking down and crying, and that's definitely odd. That's definitely not the norm, not in the NFL. But you know he's sincere, what he's saying."

McCollum's hunch about the Rams quickly paid dividends. Blowouts became routine, except for the first time in his life the lineman was on the bull side of the ledger. "It was a snowball effect," says McCollum of the Rams' run. "I've never been with a team that won that many games, that was that good. The best team I've been on or been around."

And then there was Super Bowl Sunday, a pinch-me day for McCollum and his blue-collar Ohio family. In the stands, Grandpa Leonard, a hardened teamster, didn't quite grasp the pageantry. "He was surprised at the extravagance of it. It's not really his cup of tea, but he said it's something you only see once in your life." Grandson Andy had his own front row view. He was on special teams for the opening kickoff ("I was hoping we'd win the toss so I could be out there"), nervously riding

AL MESSERSCHMIDT



the action 'til the incredible closing bell. "I was as close to the field as I could get," recalls McCollum of the game's final and deciding play. "As it went on, everybody was creeping on the field more and more. I saw it, and after that I don't remember what happened because I started running and jumping."

But the end of Super Bowl XXXIV marked the beginning of Andy McCollum's annual unemployment. It was back to playing the market, and watching the transactions pages. As a back-up in St. Louis he was expendable. That is, until he saw in the transactions that Rams starting center Mike Gruttadauria signed a four-year deal with Arizona. The Rams did a 180. "They said they wanted me to come in and be the center for the next three years," says McCollum.

The relief in his voice is unmistakable. It's the sound of a guy who finally realizes he has time to put away the transactions for a while and read the comics. ■

DOUG PENSINGER/ALLSPORT

ON APRIL 13, 1999 ...
St. John's: Announced that sophomore F **Ron Artest** will forgo his collegiate eligibility to enter the NBA draft.

A YEAR LATER ...
Artest was chosen in the first round of the 1999 NBA Draft by the Chicago Bulls. The Bulls missed the playoffs for the second straight season, while St. John's advanced to the NCAA Tournament for the 19th time in 25 seasons.

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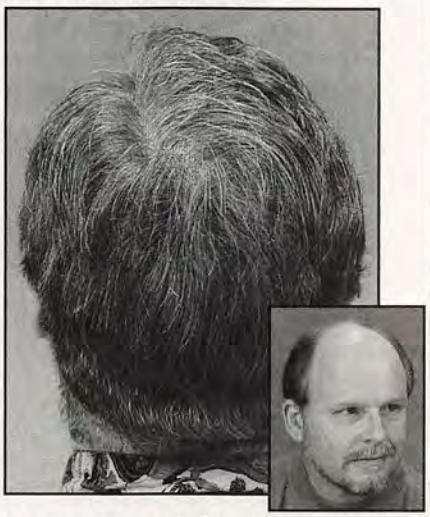

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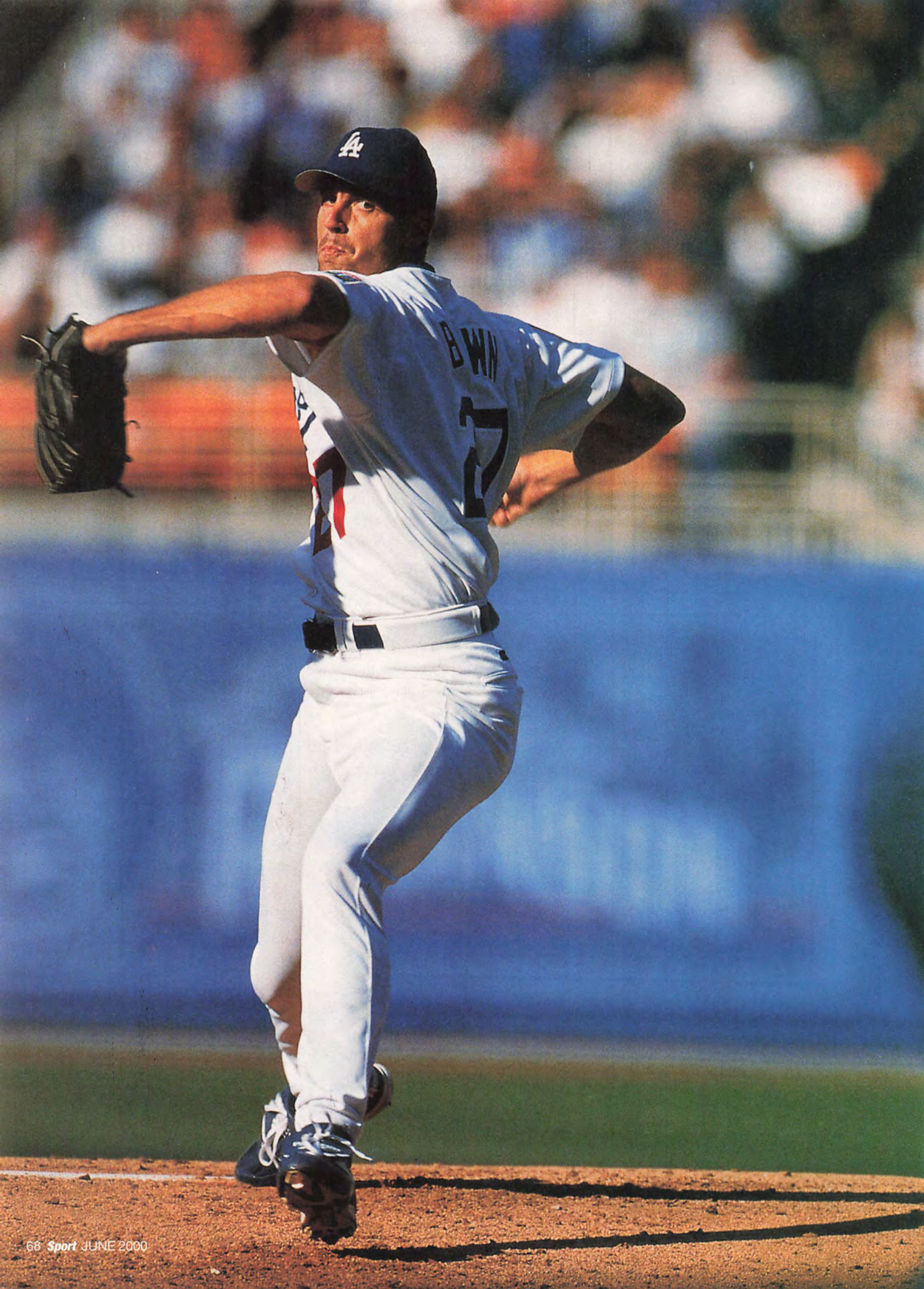
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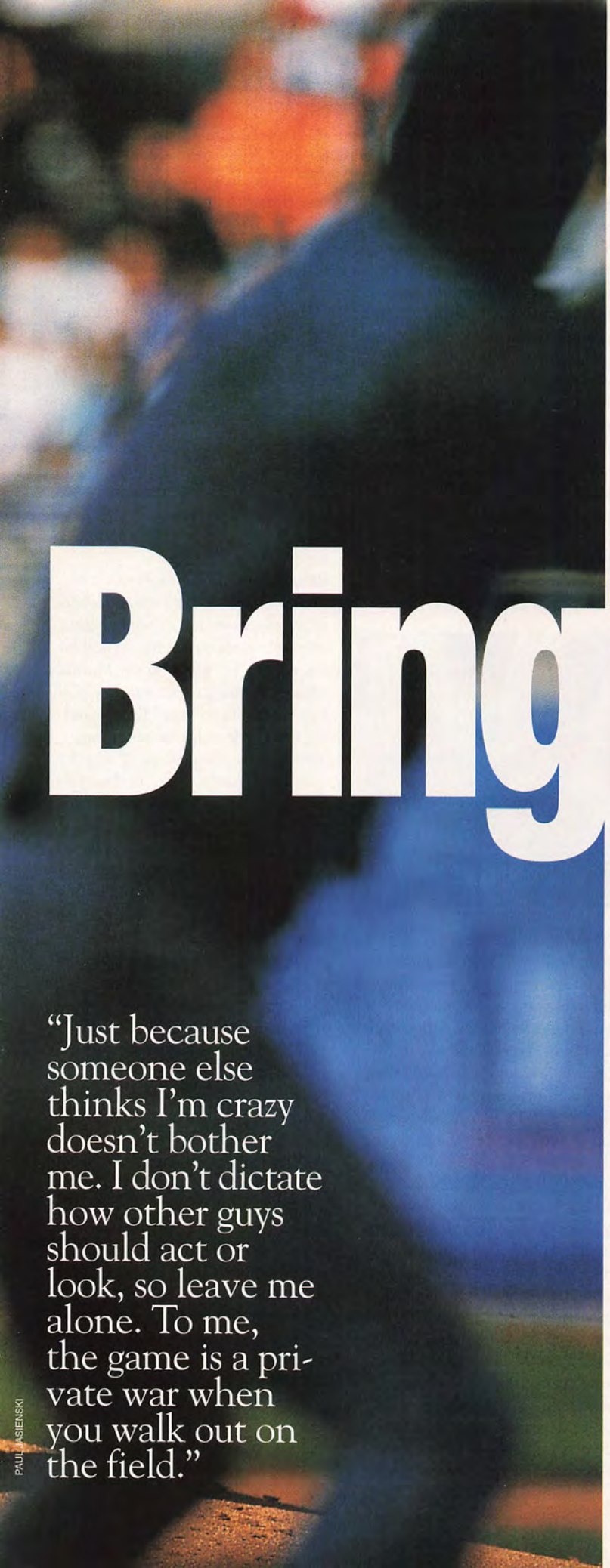

Kevin Brown proved his worth last year, now it's time for the Dodgers to do the same.

Bring in' It

Kevin Brown Doesn't Back Down From a Challenge—On or Off the Field—And He Expects the Same From the Dodgers

> By Mark Ribowsky

"Just because someone else thinks I'm crazy doesn't bother me. I don't dictate how other guys should act or look, so leave me alone. To me, the game is a private war when you walk out on the field."

PAUL JASIENSKI

WHEN THE LOS ANGELES DODGERS SIGNED KEVIN BROWN TO his history-making seven-year, $105 million free agent contract in December of 1998, the symbolic $100 million wall had been smashed by an unlikely candidate. He was a 33-year-old pitcher who'd never won the Cy Young, won 20 games just once, was a World Series failure, didn't get along with people and had bounced to five teams in six years. Brown's response was to take the ball and his famous sneer to the mound and demonstrate that his whipsaw right arm wasn't worth one cent less than what he was given. The 6-foot-4, 200-pounder, cranking out his usual hard, sinking fastball and biting splitter, towered over the Dodgers' shambles of a season, going 18-9 with a 3.00 ERA and 221 strikeouts, second in the National League to Randy Johnson.

For Brown, 35, it was an all-too-familiar story. Over each of his 11 full seasons, he's thrown at least 170 innings and made at least 26 starts. Brown, who's won 157 games, has a 2.49 ERA over the last four years (while going 69-35), lower than anyone in the league. Astonishingly for a flamethrower, he's given up all of 121 home runs in over 2,100 innings, a ratio bettered only by Greg Maddux and John Franco. Here, the Georgia native who made back-to-back World Series appearances with the Florida Marlins in 1997 and San Diego Padres in 1998, talks about the critics of his leap to L.A., the Dodgers collapse last year and his approach to the game.

Sport: You've said the Dodgers are a "good fit" for you. How so?

Brown: Just the attitude of trying to win, where guys can be what they are and not have to worry about everybody else looking at him and thinking, "He shouldn't be that way." I've had that a few times in my career and it wasn't a good fit.

Sport: But the Dodgers were a train wreck last year. Except for you, it was chaos. What went wrong?

Brown: There were just so many changes made, from management right on down the line to the personnel on the field. It was difficult for everybody to get a feel for where they were at and what they had to do. That's the nature of the game. Sometimes when you expect things to go good, they don't. Then when you have no expectations, things turn out great. With us, it's just a matter of everyone needing to take a deep breath. This year, we're gonna all take a big, deep breath.

Sport: Your team's payroll was $90 million, second to the Yankees. It's still $90 million, so aren't the expectations high again?

Brown: Expectations aren't based on the payroll. The payroll doesn't affect how you feel when you're on the field.

Sport: You really don't think a big payroll raises expectations for a team?

Brown: I'm sure it does, for the fans. But that's not what I base my expectations on. I don't personally care how much people make. That's neither here nor there. It's how much people care about how they play. With us, salaries had nothing to do with it. We just had issues everywhere, from top to bottom. We had issues with pitching, with offense, defense. It was a general lack of effort. We needed balance and consistency, and I think they made some moves here to put us in a good position this season.

Sport: So you've already answered whether you feel pressure because of your contract.

Brown: When I walk on the field, that's not what I think about. I think about getting after the guy who's got a bat in his hands. All the other stuff people make a big deal out of is peripheral.

Sport: Speaking of getting after hitters, sinkerball pitchers aren't supposed to throw as hard as you do—at 97-m.p.h.

Brown: I can throw consistently hard. But you're never the same. Sometimes you have to make changes from inning to inning, depending on what's happening with your body. It helped a lot when I picked up the splitter in San Diego. Before that, I was basically sinker-fastball-slider. Now there's another card to play. If I can get an inch of movement in a different way, get it to drop a split-second earlier or later than what they're used to seeing, or a little sharper, that makes me a little more confident and them a little less confident. And that's a huge difference in any game.

Sport: Is it true you can touch your knees without bending, and it's that arm extension that makes your arm like a whip to get that added velocity?

Brown: Obviously, God-given talent has a lot to do with it. I basically throw the same way now that I always have, even way back at Georgia Tech. For whatever reason, the way I put it all together allows me to throw like I do. Early on in my career, I got away from doing what was natural for me. In Texas, they tried to change my mechanics as soon as I got there. They thought I might blow out my elbow with the motion I have and how hard I threw. It was well-meaning advice, it just didn't work for me. It messed up my head. If you practice something they tell you to do four days out of five, on that fifth day, when you pitch, you're going to be thinking about what you did on the other four days, not what your body's telling you is right to do. It gets to the point where you waste energy. That happened in 1991 [9-12 record, no complete games in 33 starts]. I told myself then that I was going to throw my way and be the most effective I could be, whether it lasted one year or 20 years. I'd rather be my very best for two years than mediocre forever. It took me a long time to realize that even if people were supposed to know what they're talking about and have good ideas, it wasn't necessarily going to be right for me. I have to do what feels right.

Sport: People are amazed at your unorthodox habits, like throwing full-speed on rest days and throwing 200 balls once against the outfield wall before a game.

Brown: I don't know if it was 200 balls, that's kind of exaggerated. But I did throw balls against the wall trying to develop a feel for what I used to do naturally, because I was no longer comfortable with what I was doing.

Sport: Sounds like your development was as much mental as it was physical.

Brown: The mental part goes hand-in-hand with the physical part.

Sport: But you have seen a sports psychologist.

Brown: Still do. Dr. Harvey Dorfman. He's helped me and lots of other people in this game get better. Harvey's worked with me on and off since 1991. He was with the Marlins when I was with them and now I call him when I need him. He's a sounding board. He helps me see things more clearly. It's all about giving yourself a chance to get all the roadblocks out of the way so you can just go out there and perform your best.

Sport: You just look mean out there. Is that you or is it partly an act to scare hitters and get yourself motivated?

Brown: It's what I am. It's something to use to help drive myself. Just because someone else thinks I'm crazy doesn't bother me. I don't dictate how other guys should act or look, so leave me alone. To me, the game is a private war when you walk out on the field. Dave Stewart [the Blue Jays' assistant general manager who was his pitching coach with the Padres] says I look like a "serial killer" out there. I take that as a compliment.

Sport: Tom House, your pitching coach in Texas, said the players "hated your guts," and that you were a "narcissist" and "oblivious to others' feelings."

Brown: It's interesting that if all these guys hated me, no one ever had nuts enough to say something to me about it. I've asked these guys when I see stuff like that in the media, "Hey, is this the case, man? You felt that way and I didn't know about it?" And they say no, it wasn't what they said. That was writers making it up

Brown's outlook may not be conventional, but it's proven successful over his 13-year career.

FACT

Brown holds the major-league record for most strikeouts in a postseason with 46 Ks in 39.1 innings in 1998 with San Diego.

DEHOOG/TDP

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because they had the ability with the pen to try and take me down a notch because I wouldn't play their silly games. In 1993 [with Texas], in the first 11 games I had a 1.92 ERA yet I only won five games for reasons not of my own doing. But instead of talking about how well I was doing, one writer there told me, "Did you know that between your 15th and 30th pitch guys are hitting .400 against you?" When people do that kind of thing, I don't go along. I don't kiss their ass and I don't BS. And most of these writers didn't like it when I embarrassed them for being like that and they try to get back at you any way they can.

Sport: The Padres' owner, John Moores, is one person you won't be getting any bouquets from. After you left that team, he said he wanted to "clean your clock" and then delayed giving you your World Series ring for six months.

Brown: I was really disappointed by the reactions in San Diego. They benefitted a lot from me. What was I supposed to do? They gave me an offer I couldn't not refuse. They offered me less money, less years, and they flat-out told me they weren't going to be able to be competitive in the market for years. Well, gee, when you tell me that, you don't give me a lot of reasons to stay. And I did want to stay. But they did a great job of making it look like it was all me being greedy. No one thought anything about the fact that that organization made $100 million that one season to get a new stadium. I came in there and did everything I could for them from day one, yet they began tearing that team apart before they even started negotiating with me. I'd been through that kind of thing with the Marlins. Why would I stay in San Diego and go through it again? Trevor Hoffman said the reaction to me leaving was just "sour grapes," and it was.

Sport: To what do you attribute your lack of World Series success [0-3, one no-decision]?

Brown: Both of those World Series I pitched in, I was sick. It's funny, I'd said before the '98 Series that at least I'd be healthy this time. Then I woke up the day of the first game sick as a dog. Just bad luck. But I hope I get the chance a few more times when I'm not sick.

Sport: It wasn't like you to come out of that first game against the Yankees [in '98] in the seventh inning with a lead.

Brown: They felt they were better off with someone else pitching there. I didn't agree, but it's not my place to stand there and argue. If I'd tried to stay and I didn't do well, how stupid would that have made me look? What I resent in that game was the umpire not calling out Tino Martinez on that 2-2 pitch [from reliever Mark Langston, who then gave up a grand slam]. That was a strike, and it changed the whole Series. If we win that game, I think we could have made it a tough Series.

Brown heads to the mound, where one former coach said he looks "like a serial killer."

Sport: Last year, there was a story that people in your hometown of McIntyre, Ga., accused you of forgetting your roots, such as by not giving money to your old high school, yet giving to L.A. schools.

Brown: Again, that's the media trying to hurt me. Fact is, I don't give money to the L.A. schools either. I give to a charity called R.B.I. Baseball that does great work with kids. But here you had a reporter who didn't let the truth get in the way. He went up to kids at that school saying, "Do you know Kevin Brown's giving money but not here?" And the kids, they don't know the truth. To them, they're not getting money and so they wind up calling me a jerk and the reporter's got his story. It's like they try to make something out of the fact that I say I come from Macon and not McIntyre. Well, I've lived in Macon for 13 years. That's where my kids go to school. It's a private school and that's where I give money, so I can help my kids out. I don't give money to public schools. They get enough money out of my taxes anyhow. ■

OVERTIME

For more on Brown, visit L.A.'s Web site at www.dodgers.com.

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Hitch a Ride

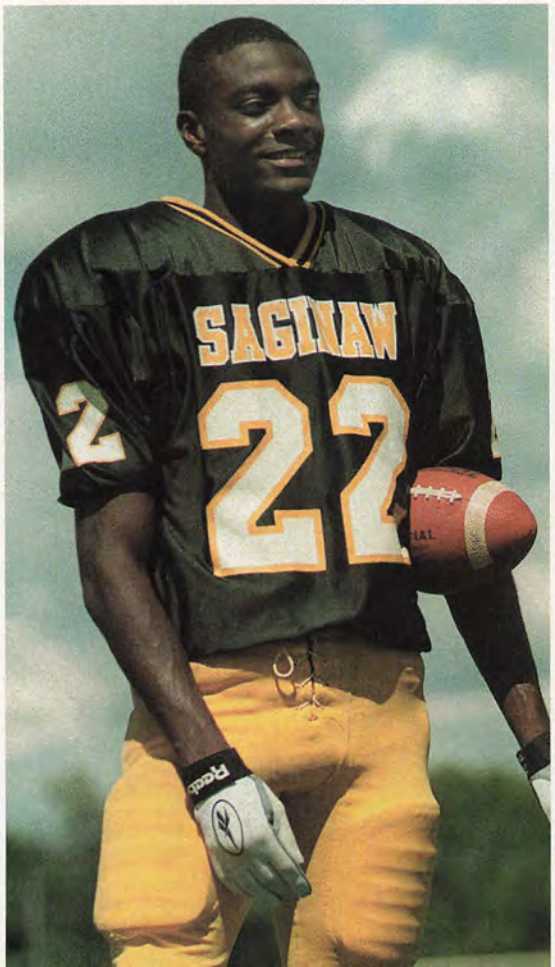
Want to Know Five Stars Who Are a Short Trip From Fame? Here Are the Young Players Destined for Greatness > By Michael Kane

CHUCK ROGERS, Wide Receiver

It's 20 minutes before the Saginaw High football team photo, and wide receiver Chuck Rogers has two problems. One, he's running late. Two, he's bleeding all over the passenger seat of his best friend's Chevy Cavalier.

Back at the school, the rest of the Trojans are nearly ready to commemorate their 14-7 victory in the Michigan big-school state championship with the photo. Speeding across town, meanwhile, their star is pitched forward against a dashboard trying desperately to catch his breath. "Take me to my house," Rogers told teammate Sam Johnson. "I gotta get my Blue Cross card. Then take me to the hospital."

Peeling off a blood-stained T-shirt, doctors discovered twin puncture wounds in Rogers' back from a stabbing with a two-pronged barbecue fork. The stabbing was the violent result of a breakup between the football star and a Saginaw schoolmate. "She wasn't my girlfriend," he says. "You know, more like just a girl you go to the movies with. We started out joking around, but it turned into an argument ... like, you know, about how I couldn't spend as much time with her. That's how I felt, but I think she had more feelings for me."



Safe bet, considering she chased down a guy with 4.39 speed across her kitchen and pierced his lung with a meat fork. "I saw her coming, and I tried to get away," Rogers says. "She got me halfway up the stairs."

Rogers spent a week at St. Luke's Hospital following the emergency re-inflation of his collapsed lung through a tube inserted into his chest. He recovered fully, and a month later joined the Saginaw basketball team. Rogers also elected not to press any assault charges. "I'm not a hateful person," Rogers says. "It's just an incident that got out of hand. I guess love hurts."

So Chuck, that was December. Now tell us about your January.

"Oh, that was crazy," he says.

That was when the 6-foot-4, 190-pounder turned down scholarship offers from Michigan and Tennessee to sign a letter of intent with nearby

THIS PAGE: THE SAGINAW NEWS; OPPOSITE: DENNIS BANCROFT/THE FLORIDA MARLINS

Wide receiver Chuck Rogers (far left) kept his winning smile in-state by choosing Michigan State, while Josh Beckett brings his Texas heat as a top Florida Marlin prospect.

Michigan State and new coach Bobby Williams. Widely considered the nation's top football prospect, Rogers had received letters postmarked East Lansing for years, but he hadn't seriously considered Michigan State until former coach Nick Saban took the top job at LSU. "That's been a misprinted thing, though, about me and Nick Saban," Rogers says. "I know he reads the papers, and if I ever see him again, I'll tell him I wasn't dogging him. It's nothing against Nick Saban. It's just that I felt more comfortable with Lloyd Carr."

And Carr, the coach of the Michigan Wolverines, was close to landing the prized recruit after Rogers' fall visit to the Ann Arbor campus. "I spent some time with [receiver David] Terrell," he says. "We hit it off, talked about football and life. I would love to play on the other side from Terrell. But he told me to do whatever's best for me."

Rogers recalls Carr's official visit, when he told the young star he could expect 40 to 50 catches in his freshman year if he signed with Michigan. "I felt like he was pulling my leg," Rogers says. "I talked to David on my visit, and I knew he only had 14 when he was a freshman."

Enter Williams, the recently promoted Spartans head coach and formerly the team's running backs coach, who also spoke of a featured offensive role for Rogers. But factoring in the departure of Michigan State's top two receivers, Plaxico Burress and Gari Scott, the words of Wiliams hit home. "He wasn't shooting any bull," Rogers says.

In Rogers, the Spartans are getting an explosive playmaker with great hands who collected 40 passes for 870 yards and 14 TDs his senior season. In the past two years, he's averaged more than 22 yards per catch en route to eclipsing 2,000 yards. "Once he's learned the system," Williams says, "I'm sure he can help us win right away. Our vision is to be playing for a national championship, and that's his vision too."

Before donning the green and white (he's leaning toward wearing No. 1), Rogers is hoping for a relaxing spring. He still goes to the movies, but his date is usually his 2-year-old daughter, Charnae. "We go see *Pocahontas* or *Pokémon*," says Rogers, who also has a baby boy named Charvez. "She falls asleep and I try to keep my mind off everything.

"I know some people think maybe I'm not a good role model because I'm a so-called superstar athlete with two kids, or whatever. The thing I can do is try to be successful for them, and make sure my kids know who their father is."

With his legendary status in Saginaw, it's unlikely anyone around town will soon forget about Rogers. But just to make sure, an image of the superstar in his uniform was superimposed onto the team photograph he never got to sit in on.

JOSH BECKETT, Pitcher

Josh Beckett says he's won't read this story. "I think it's bush league to read about yourself, really," says the 19-year-old righthander.

Good. Now we can make fun of him.

Beckett was the No. 2 pick in last year's baseball draft, a high-school pitcher who signed a $7 million major-league contract with the Florida Marlins. Never known as a bashful kid, the Texan was warned by Marlins ace Alex Fernandez he'd better not drive a Porsche into spring training.

Yeah, right. The slinger from Spring, Texas, in a 911 roadster? Try a Chevy pickup. "Hey, you want to hear my stereo," Beckett hollers from the highway near Marlins camp in Viera, Fla., holding a cell phone away from his ear. "Wait, I'll put on some country music."

Okay, fine. With part of that $3.625 million signing bonus, Beckett did have some major-league woofers installed ... in his Chevy Z71 pickup. "I'm having fun down here," Beckett says. "I'm a joker."

The Marlins, a team that finished 39 games behind Atlanta last season, are more concerned with their young ace's actions than his words. They're more interested in how soon he can throw his 97-m.p.h. fastball past Chipper Jones' kneecaps.

The four-year deal Beckett signed in September ended speculation that he might pull a J.D. Drew and enroll in Blinn Junior College in Brenham, Texas. It was the largest contract ever given to a high schooler signed out of the draft, including four options and guaranteeing his inclusion on Florida's 40-man roster for the duration. In short, Beckett begins his professional career in Single-A, but if he

The Marlins expect Josh Beckett to arrive in the majors by 2004 at the latest.

DENNIS BANCROFT/THE FLORIDA MARLINS

doesn't stick in the bigs by 2004, he goes on waivers.

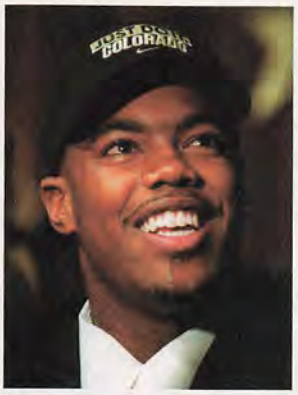
"With his advanced ability, we didn't feel like that would be a big gamble," says Marlins GM Dave Dombrowski. "We're allowing for one setback, maybe a minor injury, and expecting that one season at each level will not be rushing him at all. He could be up sooner."

To go with the popping fastball, the 6-5, 210-pound Beckett mixes in a "12-to-6" curve that buckles knees and a changeup that, at the moment, is the thrower's main concern. "You know what I want?" Beckett asks. "To throw that thing on 3-and-1. With confidence too."

Beckett, lacking confidence? "Absolutely not. I pitched B.P. in spring training and I haven't gotten stung. I could go out there and compete [in the majors] right now." His time in the minors is more about stamina. Beckett pitched 86 innings as a senior in the Houston suburbs, where he went 10-1 with a 0.46 ERA and was named national player of the year. With 155 strikeouts last year, he pushed his Spring High career total to 484 Ks to go with five no-hitters.

That dominance drew the righty comparisons to former Texas fireballers Nolan Ryan, Roger Clemens and Kerry Wood. "There's been a lot of paper used up for no reason on that subject," Beckett says. "I know there's only one Nolan Ryan. There really is. You know who cuts out these articles? My mom. She gets a kick out of all this."

Mrs. Beckett, hold onto those scissors.



Houston used his 4.39 speed to run over Denver-area high school opponents.

MARCUS HOUSTON, Running Back

The story of how the University of Colorado signed Marcus Houston, the nation's top tailback recruit, begins with how the Buffaloes blew it with his older brother Lovell. Two years ago, despite a 1,000-mile head start, Rick Neuheisel's in-state recruiters were beaten to the spot by UCLA coach Bob Toledo. Lovell, a star at Thomas Jefferson High of the Denver Prep League (DPL), signed to play defensive back with the Bruins.

"We came in late," says tight end coach Jon Embree, a CU assistant who bridges the timeline from Bill McCartney to Neuheisel to current head coach Gary Barnett. "Here's a kid picked All-American by *USA Today*, and we essentially hadn't recruited him."

Embree, who had made CU's 11th-hour bid for Lovell, phoned the Houston home again weeks later to ask what went wrong. The explanation lasted 2 1/2 hours in their kitchen. "It was painful," Embree says, "but I wanted to repair the relationship."

Then just a sophomore, young Marcus peeked in occasionally from the living room while his father, Herman, held court. "I told Jon that CU showed arrogance, expecting kids to turn down other coaches they'd known for over a year," Herman says. "And the perception was that CU wasn't recruiting in the DPL because they thought the kids were uncoachable, that half of them were in gangs. I was surprised, but he sat and listened to all that."

The seed planted in 1998 by Embree's visit was harvested in January, when Houston announced on local radio he was turning down Florida State, Texas, USC and his brother's Bruins to help reverse Colorado's slide to mediocrity.

What type of kid are the Buffs getting—aside from the 6-2, 210-pound kind that runs for 1,743 yards and scores 26 TDs as a high-school senior? Houston is nothing you're used to, unless you've known teens who've spoken on human rights for Amnesty International in Amsterdam, founded the "Just Say Know" program to help inner-city children find direction and been renamed "Neneakrofie" as an honorary tribal chief in Ghana, invited to that nation after meeting the princess at the Emancipation Celebration in Denver.

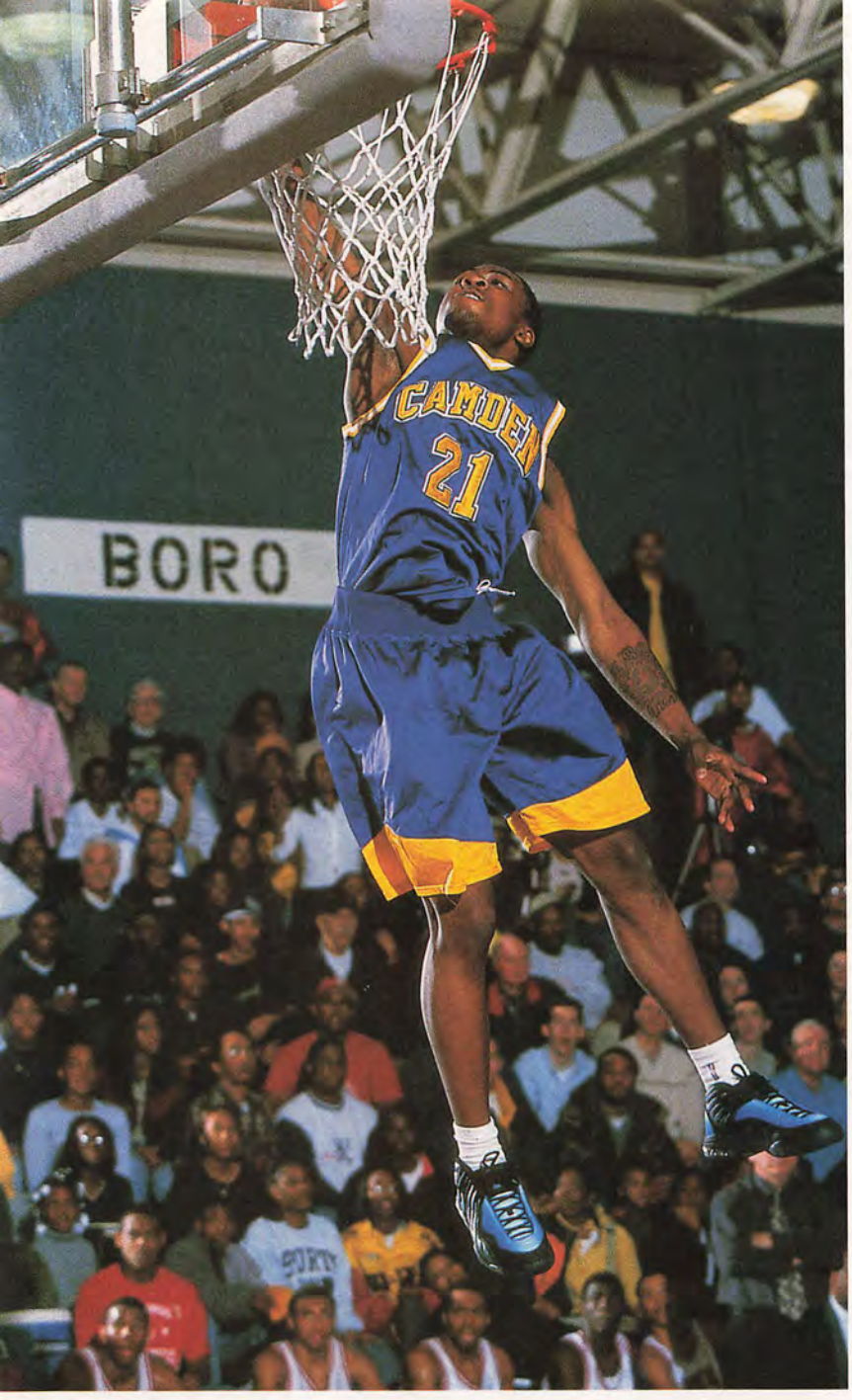
Oh yeah, and he runs a 4.39 in the 40.

"It's easy to stay humble when you visit a place like Africa and have the opportunity to meet people who are less fortunate," says Houston, who intends to return to the Big Ada region of Ghana this summer with school materials and agricultural tools.

Seriously.

"My athletic talent gives me an opportunity to make a difference," Houston says. And he's not talking about the Big 12 Conference standings. Looking for strong character? How many 18-year-olds put Bobby Bowden on the defensive, have the Florida State coach sitting in their living room and defending the reputa-

FROM TOP: ESSDRAS M. SUAREZ/DENVER ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS; CYRUS MCCRIMMON/DENVER ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS



Dajuan Wagner is alone at the top of the rising senior class of high school players, while Brian Finley is locked in on a future with the Nashville Predators.

FROM LEFT: BRIAN PORCO; DOUG CRAWFORD/BARRIE COLTS

tion of the Seminoles' program—without even bringing it up?

How many kids politely turn down Texas' Mack Brown, yet equally politely answer recruiting letters from St. Cloud State and Nebraska-Kearney?

Well, there's one now heading to Boulder thanks to an assistant coach's efforts.

DAJUAN WAGNER, Basketball Guard

Hey Dajuan, the people want to know: What's up with the J?

"It's not capitalized," says Dajuan Wagner, high school hoops phenom from Camden, N.J., officially refuting published reports that his first name is spelled "DaJuan" or even "DeJuan."

But actually we meant: What's up with the J?

"I'm working on that every day," Wagner says. "Two hundred jumpers whenever I can. You've got to have an outside shot."

So, contrary to rumors out of the Philadelphia area, Wagner is not ready to turn pro. For one thing, he's only a junior. Also, the 6-3, 180-pound penetrator needs a shooting touch to go with a first step that's second in Philly only to Allen Iverson's. But once Wagner starts knocking down the rest of those J's ....

"Right now we're concentrating on colleges," says Dajuan's father and lifelong coach Milt Wagner, the former Louisville star who won an NCAA title in 1986. "All that talk about going straight to the NBA, that's based on anticipation of how good he'll be a year from now. We hear that stuff, but we don't listen."

For now, the whirling Wagner is simply un-guardable by a single defender. But, of course, after freshman and sophomore seasons averaging 27.3 and 35.3 points, he hasn't seen anything more honest than a help box-and-one. Despite the double-teams, Wagner still drove to the basket for 30-plus and seven assists during his junior regular season. "He's got to be ready every night now," Milt says. "He's a name, so every night there's a guy trying to make a name off him."

For the well-publicized Wagner, shooting 50 percent on the road means half "oooohs" from the bleachers, but half chants of "over-rated." That's what happens when you make the papers for torching Pennsauken Tech for 80 points, or netting an even 50 at the Nike All-America Basketball Camp in Indianapolis.

Wagner doesn't seem to mind the

heat. Beneath an insulated leather Phat Farm jacket, two of his many tattoos read "The Messiah" and "I Fear No One." Wagner may fear no one, but he still wants to play the two.

"If Dajuan shoots up two or three inches, keeps working on that jump shot, I think he'll be ready for the NBA next year," says best friend and Camden High teammate Arthur Barclay, a 6-6 senior being recruited by Kentucky, Temple and, well, anyone hoping to get close to Dajuan. "Going to the hoop right now, he's got the whole arsenal."

Barclay and Wagner grew up at the Ace Ferry playground in Camden, where Dajuan's been finishing alley-oops since the age of 13. "Wide open's my type of game," says Wagner, who has played ball against friend and Sixers star Iverson. One pick-up game, on the Temple campus last NBA off-season, he also ran with 76er Aaron McKie, Owls playmaker Pepe Sanchez and Houston Rocket Cuttino Mobley. "I scored on Allen, yeah. I just played my regular game," Wagner recalls. "I got schooled a few times, though. I'm still getting better."

We'll be waiting.

BRIAN FINLEY, Goalie

He's one of the best young goalies in Canada, but Brian Finley still ventures out of the net. These days, you'll find Finley taking feeds on the offensive rush, cutting across the crease, winding up for a slapshot.

It's only street hockey, mind you. And no, it's really not allowed by his contract with the Nashville Predators. But Finley's been sneaking twilight street hockey games ever since he was a kid growing up in Sault-Ste. Marie, Ontario. It's what Finley does until he's called home.

Now playing for the Barrie Colts of the Ontario Hockey League, the 18-year-old is biding time until he gets the call from Nashville, the organization that made him the No. 6 pick in last year's NHL entry draft. The only two active NHL goalies selected among the top six are Ottawa's Tom Barrasso (selected fifth in 1983) and the Islanders' Roberto Luongo (fourth in '97). Nashville saw in Finley their future, signing him to a three-year deal worth as much as $9.175 million.

"I don't want to set a timetable on my career," says Finley, a butterflyer who showed top-level talent playing for the Predators last preseason. In parts of four games, he gave up three goals while posting a 1.62 goals-against average and a save percentage of .929, both team highs.

Finley's present, though, is back in the Barrie net, where he excelled for two All-Star seasons before getting drafted. The 6-2, 180-pound Finley was 59-24-5 from 1997-99, with season goals-against averages of 2.66 and 2.92. "It was a little tough getting sent back," says Finley, who returned to junior hockey after watching the first two Predators regular-season games while hold-out Mike Dunham worked back into shape. "But I got to see how tough it is playing goalie up there. In the NHL, everyone can pick a corner."

His goaltending coach in Barrie, Dave Jamieson, says, "I'm trying to get Brian to concentrate on the present. He's got nothing really left to accomplish individually here, but there are still kids trying to prove themselves against him."

This past winter, when Finley wasn't working toward a Colts run at the Memorial Cup, he was pursuing a high-school diploma. Behind the Barrie-area high school he attended, temptation awaited. "In Canada, there's a rink next to every school," he says. "So the guys there would challenge me to play, try to get some bragging rights. I wouldn't play goalie though. I get enough practice with the team."

And until he gets the call from Nashville, practicing is Finley's full-time job. ■

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Leading the Hit Parade

Ricardo Williams Jr. Tops the Best Group of American Boxers to Chase Olympic Gold Since the Glory Days of 1976 > By Brandon Gruner

NEVER MIND THAT RICARDO Williams Jr. is one of the most titled fighters in amateur boxing history, having already won two consecutive Junior Olympic titles, two consecutive national titles, a national Golden Gloves title, and a Goodwill Games gold medal. Never mind that Williams was also USA Boxing's 1998 Athlete of the Year and stands the best chance of any American boxer at winning a gold medal in Sydney this summer.

Only 18, Ricardo Williams already has an amateur record of 221-6.

No, beyond that, light welterweight Ricardo Williams Jr. stands to reawaken America's love of boxing as the emotional leader of the most anticipated Olympic team since 1976 and the most exciting medal-contending boxer since Sugar Ray Leonard.

There's no reason Williams shouldn't cause a stir. He's been training for this opportunity almost since the day he was first held by his father, Ricardo Sr., a former military boxing champion. "When I came home from the hospital, my father made bracelets out of tape and pennies, put them on my arms and made

WILLIAM R. SALLAZ/NEWSPORT PHOTOGRAPHY

me lift them up and down," says Ricardo Jr., recalling a story told by his mother about his first training session. "That was the third day after I came home, so I know he had something in mind."

Ricardo Sr. had no intention of letting his son grow up soft. Ricardo started playing baseball and football at an early age but the fit wasn't right. He was frustrated with team sports because his lesser-skilled teammates could control whether he won or lost. Williams wanted his destiny in his own hands.

So Ricardo Sr. introduced his son to boxing when he was just 8. "The first time I put him in the ring with a guy, he was in the corner folded up and I was about ready to make him stop, when he came out throwing punches," says Ricardo Sr. "Then he made the other boy fold up. Right there he showed me he had heart and would not let anybody beat him." For the next five years, Ricardo Jr.'s blend of straight left hands and double right hooks inspired coaches in his Cincinnati gym.

Mike Stafford joined Ricardo's training team when Ricardo was 11 and helped train him to become the Junior Golden Gloves Champion and Junior Olympic champion at 14. Buddy LaRosa, a longtime supporter of amateur boxing, recognized Ricardo's potential during that Golden Gloves tournament. Williams was boxing current 132-lb Olympian Marshall Martinez and LaRosa was impressed with Ricardo's quick feet and gloves. He became Williams' sponsor and has steered Ricardo's career away from promoters and towards his shot at winning Olympic gold. "In an Olympic year at 18, he's sitting in just the right position," says LaRosa. "If you make the Olympic team and then you medal, you're going to have much more marquee value on the pro circuit."

Williams has no trouble providing entertainment in the ring. The southpaw uses his speed to play to the crowd, often imitating the Ali shuffle. He sports dreadlocks and occasionally mixes in an abstract outfit to enhance the presentation. While Olympic coach Tom Mustin admits Williams' flamboyance could hurt in international competition, Stafford knows it has a purpose. "He doesn't showboat. He does it to throw his opponent off his rhythm and go inside, to show that he hurt the guy and is going for the kill. Sugar Ray did it the same way."

Clearly Williams' biggest Olympic challenge will be to rein in his antics and box to the computer. In order to score in Olympic boxing, three of the five judges have to register a successful punch within one second of each another. In the past Williams has tended to box near the corners, effectively blocking the view of judges. That style contributed heavily to his loss at the 1999 World Championships to Mahammat Abdullaev of Uzbekistan, his top rival for Olympic gold.

In Sydney, Williams' coaching team anticipates a different scenario. Mustin and Stafford have been teaching Ricardo to box in the center of the ring. Also, he's been lifting weights since his loss at the Worlds, the first time he's ever done so. "Ricardo is a lot stronger than he was last year, and we've been working for Mahammat for a whole year, so I know that he's in trouble," says his father. "Ricardo's like a sponge, so after he looked at the tapes and found out what he had to do, that's all he's been thinking about."

That doesn't bode well for Abdullaev: Williams, with an amateur record of 221-6, has never lost a rematch. A loss would also destroy another dream of Ricardo's father, a commercial painter who moonlights as an artist. He wants to immortalize his son's last amateur fight with a portrait of Ricardo, his hands raised and Olympic gold around his neck. "Ricardo is fine art," Ricardo Sr. says. "Ain't no commercial art there. No way." ■

SI FACT

The 1976 Olympic boxing team included gold-medal winners Sugar Ray Leonard, Leon and Michael Spinks, Howard Davis Jr. and Leo Randolph.

Williams has been boxing more in the center of the ring to make it easier for judges to see his punches.

WILLIAM R. SALLAZ/NEWSPORT PHOTOGRAPHY (2)

2000

GRAVITY GAMES™

Summer 2000 Providence Rhode Island

TELEVISED ON NBC (10/8, 4-6PM) (10/15, 2-4PM) (10/22, 4-6PM) (10/29, 4-6PM) (11/5, 4-6PM): All times EST

Event dates: Saturday July 15th - Sunday July 23rd

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WHO WANTS TO BE A SPORTS BROADCASTER?

Or, How Dan Patrick, a Wandering Earpiece, an Audience and a Little Red Light Can Make Any Man Crumble > By David Scott • Photography By Joan Beard

"IT'S TV. NOT BRAIN SURGERY. IT'S TV. Not brain surgery. It's TV. Not brain surgery. It's TV. Not brain surgery."

These are the words printed on the bathroom walls of the AMS Studios in Dallas. These are the words I continued to see each time I took a whiz with Liz. Taylor, that is, whose *Cleopatra* film rolled repetitively on the mini-screens above each urinal. The whole bathroom had an Egyptian motif and the word surgery was cleverly spelled "svrgery" to emphasize the Egyptianness of it all. These are the words that

became my mantra during Craig James two-day broadcast school. My classmates—recently retired NFL stars Seth Joyner and Kevin Greene, and active NFL players Levon Kirkland of Pittsburgh, New Orleans' La'Roi Glover and the New York Giants' Jason Garrett—and I had come to learn from the man who has made the transition from player to broadcaster into a lucrative career both in front of, and away from the camera. Having never been an NFL player myself, my transition will admittedly take a bit longer. Okay, infinitely longer. Who the heck are you, John Madden?

Sure, you sit there and watch all the games and the pregame shows and the postgame shows and post-postgame shows and the pre-pregame shows, and you start to think, "This guy's a moron." This thought seems especially true when you watch someone named Jerry or Terry. Well, wait just a minute. The sounds and images emanating from that plastic box on top of your hand-assembled entertainment center may not be brain surgery. But they sure ain't tiddlywinks either.

I say this now from experience—the experience of participating in James' school and the experience of watching my classmates' experience. Never has a 270-pound, mammoth man looked so petty, so vulnerable and so beatable as he does when the camera's red light is pointed at him for the first time. For once, a man like Kirkland, Greene or Glover is the puny running back looking into the gargantuan belly of a frothing beast. "We get these guys as a naked child, in their purest sense," James says. "I tell them to check their egos at the door. I know there are egos when they come in, but they won't last in here."

"At first," Joyner says, "I think I've got to overcome that fear and nervousness of having the camera on me. And having that earpiece in my ear."

Ah, yes, the earpiece.

THEY'LL START WITH A TWO-SHOT, they tell me. Then they'll get tight for a one-shot on Spencer, who will set up the wrap-around of Kevin's package which will come back into a two-shot and lead into the break. Okay? Ready in five, four, three....

I nod and smile trying to conceal the very real problem of not being able to hear the dude in my ear because the plastic ear piece wasn't sitting properly in my right ear. Remembering the bathroom philosophy I had studied, I just kept nodding and I just kept smiling. I knew these studio walls, of all walls, knew of what they were speaking. It was in this very building that Ross Perot had made many of his landmark national television appearances with Larry King and the like. They even named one of the studios after Perot which got me thinking they might someday name one after me, "The Dork Whose Earpiece Kept Falling Out Studio." But I have hope because if there's anyone in American history who proved TV isn't brain

Clockwise from top left: On the set with Kirkland, Glover and Tillman; our man gets made over, then plays earpiece war games; James grins and bears it.

surgery it was ramblin' Ross.

The next thing I knew, my co-host on our mock version of "The NFL Today," school instructor and rising TV star, Spencer Tillman, was doing an intro to the game we were pretending to lead into. My earpiece was slipping out, I sensed I still had blueberries in my teeth from the morning muffin and for the life of me I couldn't figure out which of the two cameras to look into, or if maybe I should just look at Spencer.

"Nurse," I began to think, "scalpel please. Let's begin the brain surgery."

I THINK I HAD AN ADVANTAGE OVER my classmates, although to ever suggest a pudgy sportswriter with a vast eight-track collection could ever be positioned better than millionaire athletes did seem a bit misguided. Nevertheless I had prepared for my trip to the Craig James SOB (imagine the t-shirt sales!) by enlisting a mentor. Once I discovered why Howard Cosell wasn't returning my phone calls, I settled on ESPN's Dan Patrick. Not only was Patrick alive and well, he had recently been honored as the National Sportscaster of the Year. And, truth be told, I thought it would be a good way to procure some TGI Friday's coupons from one of their pitchmen.

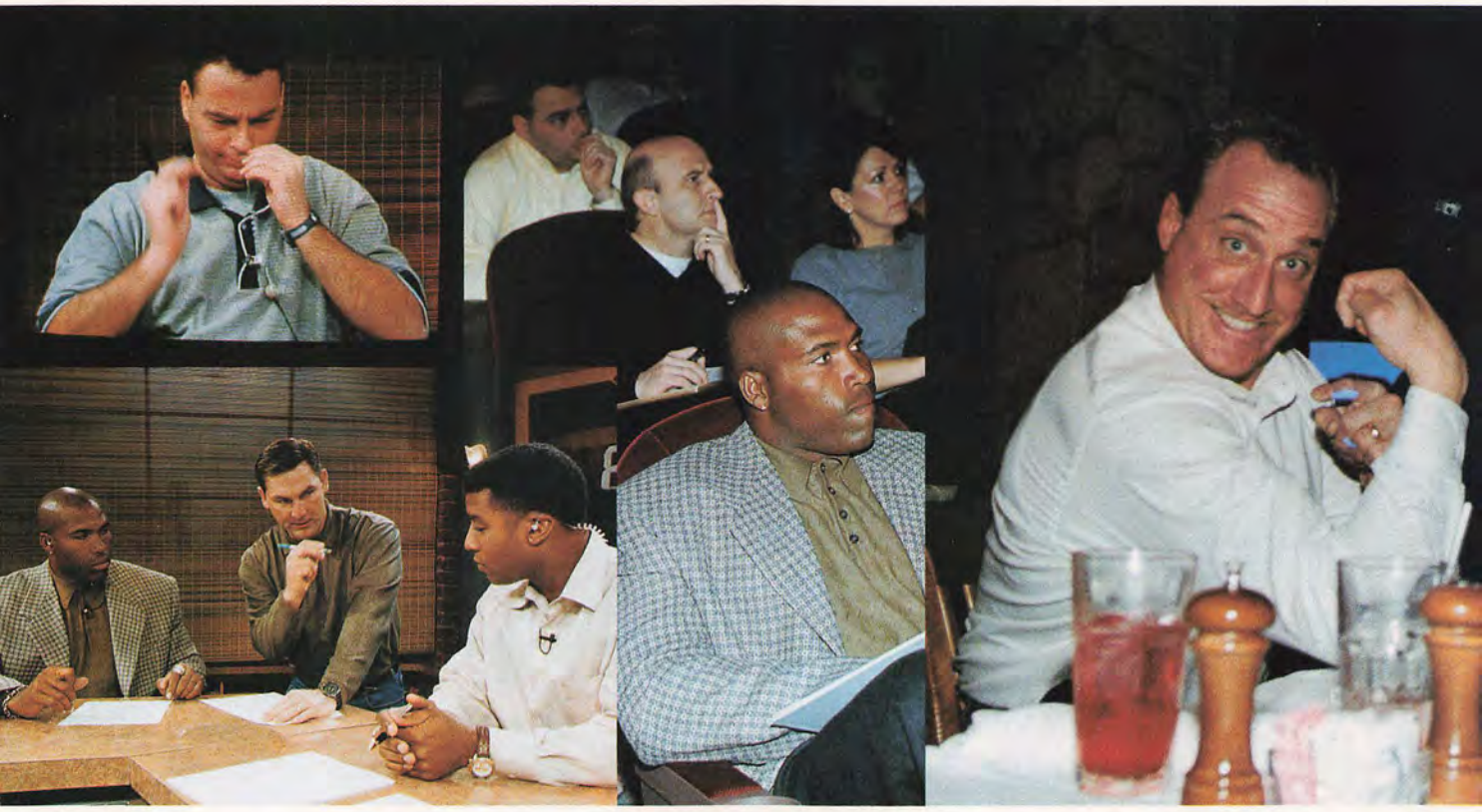
Patrick and I had much in common: Both of us attended Atlantic 10 schools (he went to Dayton), both of us had the first initial "D," and both of us have, at least once in our lives, worn a corduroy suit. Granted, Dan wore his inexpensive blue corduroy number during his television debut filling in one Friday night at a Dayton station. I had worn my brown Betty one Friday night at a '70s costume party. Says Patrick, now married with children, "The ladies liked it back then." That's my mentor!

Picking Patrick as a MOD (Mentor of Dave) was as logical as turning to the Craig James SOB. Patrick is one of the country's most respected sports broadcasters, someone who gets the best out of almost all his interview subjects, a lost art in most realms of journalism. For that and other reasons, he has been called the sports world's answer to Peter Jennings, and his mass appeal has landed him several lucrative endorsement deals and an extremely popular (and most enjoyable) radio show on the ESPN Radio Network. When Peter Warrick visited the show during Super Bowl week, Patrick announced, as Warrick entered with his handful of followers: "You know you've made it when you have a posse. I want a posse."

Instead, Dan got me—a Positively Average Student, a PASee, off sorts. "You know, you're either funny or you're not," Patrick says. "You need to speak your language. Make sure you write your own copy and write it in your own words. Read your own words. With my stuff: I wrote it, I read it. It helps you from a confidence standpoint. All you want is confidence. If you find the comfort level, you'll find confidence. The less you think about, the better. If you're yourself, you have no one to blame but yourself."

True. But I could always blame my mentor.

SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE, IT TURNS out, is a key to the TV business. Take "Burn," for instance. Now there's a popular term at the Craig James SOB. As in, "Let's do that take over. It stunk. Burn the last one." It happens to the best of 'em, but when you're just learn-



Lesson No. 1: Earpiece, NOT, a nosepiece; Joyner takes notes at the front of the class; Greene flexes for the camera; James and Tillman work with Joyner.

ing the business, it happens, at best, quite often. Bob Neal of TNT, another of the school's instructors at this session—James runs various sessions throughout the off-season for NFL players, and plans more for other athletes—surmises during one Telestrator lesson, "We don't care about the pain, just show us the baby."

After one take, Joyner, mindful of the birthing process, told the control room, "You can burn that one, I'm ready to tear it up on this next one." Sure enough, Joyner gave birth to a beautiful baby segment for his resume tape.

"It's got to become second nature for me," Joyner tells James during their one-on-one exit evaluation. "You know, when I put on a uniform it became like riding a bike for me. I'm not a stranger to work, it's just becoming comfortable with it.

"I learned more by lunch time [of the first day] then I ever had," Joyner says. "And I was a communications major!"

"It's the reps, man, it's about getting your reps in," James says.

"Reps is the big thing," Joyner agrees. "If you don't get the reps during the week, you won't be effective on Sundays."

To gain that effectiveness, James prepares his students on the basics of sideline reporting, radio commentary, studio commentary and TV booth commentary. "We hope that we're a springboard, one way or another, for players to get into broadcasting," James says. All this, make-up application lessons, hotel accommodations, food, a snazzy golf shirt, a resume tape and access to James' huge network of contacts, for just $4,000. Not chump change for most, but it's bargain basement if you're an athlete trying to break into the business.

So far, some of the more than 150 graduates of the Craig James SOB include, ESPN's Merril Hoge and Sean Salisbury, Fox Sports' James Lofton and D.J. Johnson and CBS's Marcus Allen. "Since we're in an actual studio, and on a set and using state of the art equipment, it's almost like there's a hidden element of teaching for [the students]," James says. "We're never laughing at them, but we have a lot of fun."

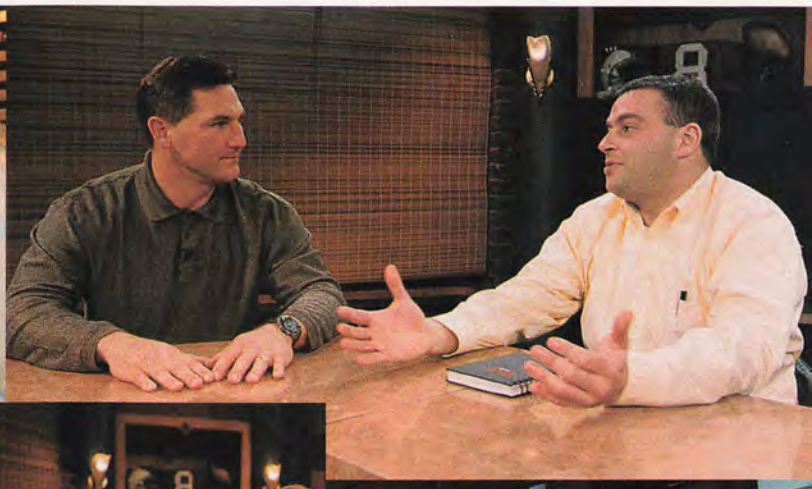
Case in point: Kevin Greene. Already known for his rugged play and also for his foray into wrestling, Greene is sure to soon be recognized for his natural broadcasting skills—he may someday out-Madden Madden or out-Long Howie. Remembering when Patrick had told me the biggest key for anyone trying to get into the industry was to "Be yourself," my assessment of Greene has at least some basis in credibility to it. Since nobody else could ever be Greene, he's got an advantage. His "ooohs" and "ahhhs" during one take in the mock broadcasting booth with Neal were genuine bursts of emotions and when he brought out a line that included, "What the flippin' flyin'?" it was as if someone had just cut him off on the highway—natural, unrehearsed and emotional. His "Wasssuuupppp" mock interview with Kirkland, his former Pittsburgh Steelers teammate, was "Saturday Night Live" solid gold. "I'll be the first to admit I'm a little fruit loop, but I'm okay with it," Greene tells James in their exit interview. "I want to be a Pro Bowler in everything I touch. I see this as another challenge. I had done some games in NFL Europe and over there it was boom, boom, boom, boom. This school clarified everything for me."

Two happy grads; Garrett, Greene and Tillman whoop it up; a stand-up for our broadcaster-to-be.

"It's like playing golf–you can read all you want about it, but until you start doing it, you don't get a feel for it."

IT HAD CLARIFIED MORE THAN A FEW things for myself as well: Patrick, my mentor, had been kind when he told me, "Don't be intimidated by the players—you can put your thoughts into words better than they can. You're able to write, to create. They're going to give you jock speak." Looking back on that conversation now, it was Patrick's following words that rang truest, "David, they know more than you do."

Something that also became very clear was that two days at Craig James SOB wasn't going to make me very much a broadcaster, first and foremost, unafraid to slam players or coaches and always over-prepared for any situation. "I was such a competitive workaholic as an athlete, and I became the same way when I started out in this business," says James, 39, and president of his own multi-layered company, The Pony Sweep. "I used to practice by doing daily, 60-second sports updates into a tape recorder. I studied the business. I watched Larry King and how he interviewed people. I did drills in



Bob Costas (thank God). James parlayed a solid college career at Southern Methodist—as part of the Pony Express backfield with (SOB graduate) Eric Dickerson and later as a Pro Bowler with the New England Patriots—into a successful stint as a studio analyst for ESPN's "College GameDay." He left ESPN in 1996 for CBS, working in the studio for "College Football Today" for two years before moving to "The NFL Today." He is the benchmark for all former athletes trying to get into the field. He has transcended his playing days and is no longer looked upon as an athlete-turned-broadcaster. He is writing and listening."

In that respect, Glover, who enters only his fifth year in the NFL, has a head start on many of his peers. He can practice for his future while working on his present. Garrett, who confirms the theory of quarterbacks being naturals for television, says, "It's like playing golf—you can read all you want about it, but until you start doing it, you don't get a feel for it."

And then there was the crystallization of my own abilities.

THERE I SAT, GETTING A FEEL FOR IT, with Spencer to my left and my earpiece war raging on in my right ear. Spencer would feed me a line, I would look towards the camera for a bit, speaking to it as if it were my mother (Patrick's suggestion) and then towards Spencer (producer's suggestion). We offered insight—I think—and had some yuks and in three minutes it was all over—the pain gone, the baby born. "Annnddddd, fade to black," I heard from the earpiece that had miraculously nestled into place. "Great job, David." Spencer and I shook hands. My classmates gave me high-fives and backslaps, and I thought I heard Craig calling his agent on my behalf. Or maybe he was ordering lunch.

Greene "interviews" Kirkland; Dave drones on; then watches his effort in agony; Garrett has the TV grin; and a look at a future TV lineup?

"I have but one thing to say," I said, as I rose from my chair behind the desk, "I am retiring from broadcasting. I need another challenge."

After all, I thought, it's TV. Not brain surgery. Fade to black, indeed. ■

OVERTIME

Dan Patrick will release a book in May, titled "Outtakes," while Craig James returns to CBS this fall. In the meantime you can check out his Web site at craigjames.rivals.com or ponysweep.rivals.com.

raw sport presents

GRAVITY GAMES

The second-annual Summer Gravity Games will take place in Providence, R.I., from July 15-23 and will be broadcast on NBC. For more info, log on to www.gravity-games.com.

In Style

The Popularity of Freestyle Motocross Has Taken a Great Leap Forward > By Dan Gordon

PRIOR TO LAST YEAR'S GRAVITY GAMES, THE HISTORY OF MAJOR FREESTYLE MOTO COMPETITION CONSISTED OF A HALF-DOZEN EVENTS; IN the year between Gravity Games I and Gravity Games II, more than 20 contests are being held. The result, not surprisingly, is a quantum leap in the quality of the performances. It's a long jump from the now-simple heel-clickers once displayed at supercross intermissions to the double-handed superman seat grabs patented by the likes of Carey Hart. If you don't believe us, check it out July 15-23, when the Summer Gravity Games return to Providence, R.I.

The Perfect Run

By Ronnie Faisst

Some days I just feel good. I'm dialed into the course and I look at the other guys and they're still trying to figure it out. And then when I'm the guy trying to figure it out, I'm like, "S---, I've got one minute to qualify and I'm still over-jumping stuff!" It's so quick of a deal—one minute of your life, and you're either on or off.

Raw Data

Freestyle motocross has been likened to BMX on steroids. On an all-dirt track, riders choose their own lines on terrain that includes monster-gap jumps, spines, diamond hits, obstacles and ramp-to-ramp transitions. Judging is based on style, degree of difficulty, continuity, amplitude and originality.

Leaders of the Pack

By Mike Cinqmars

Our sport's so new, and in our second year we already had NBC and ESPN covering it. I think we've helped to establish it as the newest, gnarliest sport. We're going a lot bigger than anyone else. We're doing stuff that the BMX guys are doing, only they're doing maybe 15-foot gaps, and we've got motors so we're doing it over 80- or 100-foot gaps.

An Awesome Performance

By Travis Pastrana

Kris Rourke really impressed me at last year's Gravity Games. There was a line on the track that only one other guy, Kenny Bartram, was doing, and Kenny went so high in practice that when he landed, he just cartwheeled. In his run, Rourke hit the jump from about five feet higher and on a steeper part than Kenny did, went up, looked at the crowd while he was in the air ... it was outstanding that he would even attempt something like that, and he landed it perfectly. The crowd just went nuts.

Winning Respect

By Carey Hart

People who have my respect are the ones who are pushing the sport, coming up with new tricks, and just staying level-headed. Some guys become "rock stars" when they start getting a lot of attention. I try not to get caught up in that crap. I still hang out with the same people now that I did 10 years ago when I was nothing. I ride a dirt bike for a living—there are other things to be way more rock star about.

In 15 Years

By Mike Jones

I'll be 45, and I will definitely be in the sport, whether it's in management or promotion. I broke my neck before last year's Gravity Games. I was in the hospital—I had to get surgery and plates and screws and the whole deal. At first I said I was quitting, but there was no way. A week later there was an event in my backyard. There were 20,000 people there and everybody was around and it was like, this is my life, this is what I love. I'll probably still be riding a bike in 15 years, just for fun.

ALL PHOTOS BY JOHN GILLOOLY/PEI

You've gotta SEE this.

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Sport *Where entertainment and sports collide*

OUT OF BOUNDS

Edited by Scott Burton and Darryl Howerton

ILLUSTRATION: SCOTT ANGLE

THE CROSSOVER WITH ...

BILL GOLDBERG

ALTHOUGH WCW GRAPPLER BILL GOLDBERG MAY NOT BE READY to tackle *Hamlet* just yet, he is an emerging multi-media wrestling star. He's currently starring in the recently released wrestling comedy *Ready To Rumble*, along with Oliver Platt and David Arquette. This summer he will be featured in Electronic Arts' WCW wrestling game for the new PlayStation 2 system, and he will release his autobiography later this winter. He may even be coming to a Slim Jim wrapper near you (see story on the next page). We caught up with the former Atlanta Falcon to talk wrestling, movies and his future.

SPORT: What do most athletes think of you?

Goldberg: They either pass judgment on you and treat you like their children's hero, or they treat you like somebody they respect and are entertained by. You can definitely tell the difference between the two. It's cool to be one of the wrestlers that, like, Wayne Gretzky's kids admire. That's a very weird situation. I never would've guessed in a trillion years that I'd be in that situation.

SPORT: Your peers feel the same?

Goldberg: They're only amazed because it's such a goofy way to succeed. You go from being a member of the NFL, which to me is the elite, to becoming a professional wrestler, which in my eyes, in the past, was one of the least revered jobs in the whole industry. It's strange how I've acquired my fans.

SPORT: Do you ever run into athletes who have wanted to get in the business?

Goldberg: A buddy of mine, Scott Adams, probably played for 50 teams over nine years, and he's into it. Kevin Greene and Steve McMichael have done it. Karl Malone did it a little bit, Dennis Rodman did it. I really don't know too many guys who want to do it full-time.

SPORT: Any other current athletes who are tailor-made for wrestling?

Goldberg: Oh, John Randle would be a shoo-in. No doubt.

continued on page 93

OUT OF BOUNDS

Sport TOP 11
Worst Athlete-Musicians

11

Joe Frazier: Recorded with The Knockouts, which, curious enough, is what his album did to insomniacs

10

Shaquille O'Neal: Yes, he sells a lot of albums. So does Will Smith. But credibility is not a commodity

9

Wayman Tisdale: Purveyor of ooey, gooey, contemporary jazz, the kind synonymous with waiting rooms

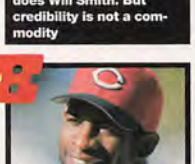
8

Deion Sanders: Prime Time? Try Bargain-Bin Time

7

Terry Bradshaw: Of course his country album stinks. Would you expect otherwise?

6



Muhammad Ali: Floated like a butterfly, stung like a bee, sung like a wounded platypus

5

Brett Favre: First, *Something About Mary*. Now, "NFL Country." How's that day job going, big guy?

4

Rey Ordonez: Repeat: his inclusion is mandatory on "worst-of" lists

3

The Price Family (Mark & Brent): Gives the Carpenters and Osmonds a run for corniest family award

2

Nancy Kerrigan: Next time, Tonya, aim for the larynx. Sorry, is that mean? Well, have you heard her sing?

1

Carl Lewis: Responsible for the "real" greatest sports moment of the 20th century: Charley Steiner cracking up

Picks of the Month

VIDEO GAME

Arena Football Unleashed
Maker: Midway
Platform: Sony PlayStation and Sega Dreamcast

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Midway introduced football mayhem in the form of NFL Blitz, so it's not a shock that they're carrying the 50-yard mantle of the Arena Football League. This title is an out-of-the-box score fest with hard hits and entertaining animations, and it features ESPN's Larry Beil as announcer. You don't have to follow Arena Football to enjoy this game, you simply have to be a fan of hard-hitting football. (And aren't you interested in seeing what the Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Des Moines looks like in the game?)

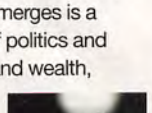
—Paul M. Johnson

BOOK

Pitching Around Fidel
Author: S.L. Price
Publisher: Ecco Press

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Cuban baseball stars Orlando Hernandez, Rey Ordonez and Livan Hernandez defected to America in search of a better life. S.L. Price travels to Cuba in search of the stories they left behind. What emerges is a vivid account of politics and sport, poverty and wealth, heroes and traitors, and the unfinished war between communism and capitalism. He travels the country in search of sports stars, past and present, and finds athletes either spitting on Castro's regime or taking it with them to the grave. A chilling and intimate read.



—Brian Sztabnik

Poison, Thy Name Is Ostrim

We like to eat meat, especially when it's been processed and compressed into abstract shapes. We would even go so far as to call ourselves "meat snack" connoisseurs, having tried every patty, strip and chew on the planet. That said, we offer the following bit of advice: Don't, on your life, let a WWF Ostrim Meat Snack come within 15 feet of your mouth. To be safe, make that 25 feet. These things were so revolting, we couldn't down one bite. And believe me, it wasn't for lack of trying. We tried the Ostrim sticks, the Ostrim beef jerky, and the Ostrim beef jerky chew, and all enraged our normally indiscriminate taste buds. Just to make sure it wasn't us (we were pretty sure though), we submitted our staff to a blind taste test: WCW-sponsored Slim Jim, the ultimate mass-marketed beef jerky vs. WWF-sponsored Ostrim. The results, unpretty as they are, are below.

How can something this cute taste so wrong?

SNACK: Slim Jim
Average Rating: 5.5 (out of 11)
Typical Comment:
"Bland"
"Salty"
"The Cadillac of Meat Snacks"

SNACK: Ostrim Jerky
Average Rating: 4
Typical Comment:
"Do I have to swallow?"
"Fishy"
"Breaks down nicely"

SNACK: Ostrim Chew
Average Rating: 2
Typical Comment:
"Looks like hair clippings"
"I'm afraid of it"
"Dog-food territory"

SNACK: Ostrim Stick
Average Rating: 7
Typical Comment:
"Strong aftertaste"
"Juicy"
"Salami-like"

Ostrim Stick and Ostrim Chew

Ostrim Jerky

FRAZIER: MARKUS BOESCH/ALLSPORT; TISDALE: OTTO GRUELE/ALLSPORT; BRADSHAW: DARREN CARROLL/DUOMO; FAVRE: BRIAN BAHR/ALLSPORT; PRICE: ROCKY WIDNER/NBA PHOTOS; LEWIS: CHRIS COLE/DUOMO; KERRIGAN: WILLIAM SALAZ/DUOMO; ORDONEZ: TOM DIPACE; ALI: COUR SPORT ARCHIVE; SANDERS: TOM

THE PLANNER JUNE

june 11 • kmart 400 • brooklyn, mich. • or, as it's known in the hamptons, the martha stewart 400 • june 15-18 • u.s. open championship • pebble beach • we're no golf experts, but we know who we're putting our money on: willie wood. he rules. june 26 • wimbledon • london, england • agassi and graf both went down (insert dramatic

See No Evil, Hear No Evil

Why Baseball Analysts Don't Know What They're Talking About

JUST ONCE—ONCE!—WE'D LIKE TO hear the following words come out of Harold Reynolds' mouth: "Brian Hunter stinks. Really, really stinks. And Lou Piniella stinks for playing him." But as obvious as Hunter's deficiencies may be, you can bet Reynolds will never say such a thing. Neither will Tim McCarver, Joe Morgan, Joe Buck or any of the other TV baseball analysts out there. With not one darn exception, they all adhere to a backwards broadcasting philosophy: If it potentially offends a ballplayer, or it isn't easily digested by the novice fan, don't say it.

What, exactly, are we talking about? During a Cubs game on ESPN last year, Reynolds attempted to argue that Lance Johnson was a good leadoff hitter. Now, everything you need to know about Johnson's aptitude as a leadoff hitter is neatly summarized by one simple statistic: on-base percentage. And Johnson's career OB% is .334, which is very, very poor. Strangely though, Reynolds dismissed the significance of the stat. Instead, Reynolds cited two terribly misleading concepts: 1) Johnson takes a lot of pitches, such that the rest of the Cubs hitters can better read the pitcher—a notion that even if it was true (it isn't, Johnson takes relatively few pitches), is incredibly vague and entirely uncertifiable. 2) Johnson's decent batting average—a meaningless stat whose only merit is its familiarity to most fans.

Don't mean to pick on Reynolds, though. The reality is, all of the analysts you see on TV commit the exact same errors. Part of the problem is that players themselves are extremely sensitive. Back in our October 1999 issue, we ran a poll in which the players voted Morgan the game's worst announcer because he was too critical. Now, we've listened to Morgan quite a bit, more than we'd like to, and we can tell you, his reputation as a tough guy is greatly exaggerated. In fact, he'll usually go out of his way to avoid embarrassing a player whose incompetence is on full display. And if ballplayers get in a snit over Morgan … well, no wonder Reynolds says little else in regards to scrubs other than, "all they need is an opportunity."

Reynolds and Morgan just don't understand: Brian Hunter is one terrible baseball player.

The main problem, though, is that most color men are stuck in the Dark Ages of baseball analysis. They promote the importance of such discredited notions as batting average, "small ball," and clutch hitting—notions whose continued existence is due mainly to the fact that they've been around for so long—while stubbornly refusing to challenge or update their assumptions. It's entirely inexcusable. The road to enlightenment is an easy one to follow—for starters, try Andrew Torrez' book, *Off-Base: New Insights Into An Old Game*, or simply hit up Rob Neyer on ESPN.com—and even old baseball mules like Peter Gammons are catching on. If it all sounds like a bit much, though, they can at least start by repeating after me: Brian Hunter stinks.

—*SB*

continued from page 91

SPORT: Why Randle?

Goldberg: Because he's an individual. He's boisterous, very confident and he's one hell of an athlete. Got a motor in him that never stops. He entertains everyone else by entertaining himself.

SPORT: Any actors whose styles influenced your acting in *Ready To Rumble?*

Goldberg: Well, there's definitely the ones who came before me who've enabled me to be in movies. Rowdy Roddy Piper, Hulk Hogan, Jesse Ventura, Andre The Giant, now Sting has a two-hour movie deal. But in this movie, I'm just trying to be myself, man. And since I'm playing myself, there's not a whole lot of acting involved.

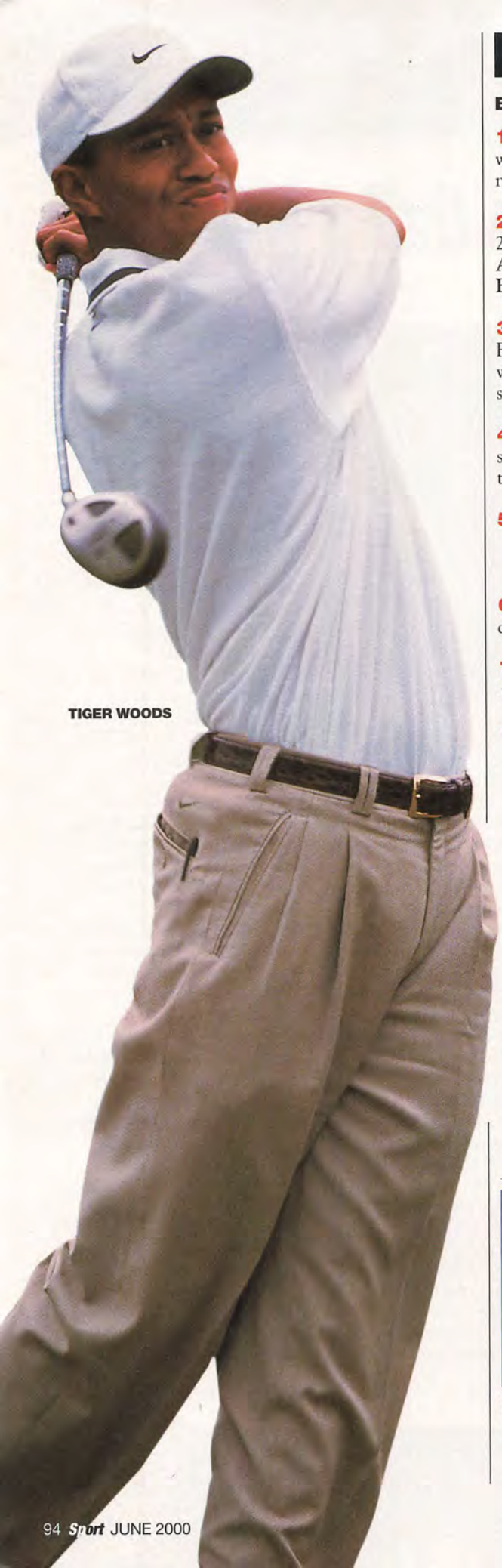
SPORT: Are there any limits to this wrestling phenomenon? Jesse Ventura is Minnesota's governor, two of the three best-selling books are by wrestlers ...

Goldberg: ... There's gonna be three in the top four because my book is probably gonna come out in winter time. With Jesse becoming governor, I would say there's no end to this. All it says is America has opened its mind a little bit and judged people for what they believe in and how they carry themselves. After Jesse was elected, it showed anything can happen. I don't see myself being elected president, but who knows what could happen?

—*DH*

FROM TOP: TOM DIPACE; COUR ESPN (2); STEWART: PATRICK MCMULLAN/LIAISON

pause here) in last year's finals. june 26/27 • cardinals @ reds • cinergy field • griffey vs. mcgwire, or something. june 28 • nba draft • minneapolis • you're gonna have to look elsewhere for clippers jokes. our supply is, as of last issue, officially exhausted.



TIGER WOODS

sport quiz

By Dan Gordon

1. Earlier this year, Tiger Woods' string of six consecutive PGA Tour victories was snapped. Who holds one of the most remarkable records in sports, winning 11 consecutive PGA Tour events?

2. Who was the youngest woman to win a Grand Slam tournament in the 20th century?

A. Tracy Austin, 1979 U.S. Open
B. Martina Hingis, 1997 Australian Open
C. Monica Seles, 1990 French Open
D. Serena Williams, 1999 U.S. Open

3. Twenty years ago, what Laker scored 37 points in Game 6 of the NBA Finals, helping his team to a series-clinching win over the 76ers—though he was overshadowed by rookie Magic Johnson's 42 points, 15 rebounds and seven assists in the same game?

4. Twenty-five years ago, the Cincinnati Reds fielded one of the most feared starting lineups in major-league history. Perhaps the least-known member of the Big Red Machine played center field. Name him.

5. Who produced the most RBIs in the majors during the 1990s?

A. Albert Belle
B. Barry Bonds
C. Ken Griffey Jr.
D. Rafael Palmeiro

6. Name any of the three major-league teams that had five different opening-day managers during the 1990s.

7. Name either Colorado's or Florida's all-time winningest pitcher entering the 2000 season.

8. Who entered 2000 as the active major-league leader in triples?

A. Rickey Henderson
B. Tony Fernandez
C. Lance Johnson
D. Tim Raines

9. Who was the only player on a 1999 NFL roster who won the Heisman Trophy and was the top overall pick in the NFL draft?

10. Dick Vermeil was the fifth coach to leave his team after winning a Super Bowl. Name three of the four who preceded him.

The *Sport* Stumper

This Month's Stumper: Who was the last NBA Rookie of the Year who wasn't a first-round draft pick?

Answer to last month's stumper (Name the four players who have won championships in NCAA Division I basketball and the NBA in back-to-back years): Bill Russell (1956 with the University of San Francisco, 1957 with the Celtics), Henry Bibby (1972 with UCLA, 1973 with the Knicks), Magic Johnson (1979 with Michigan State, 1980 with the Lakers), and Billy Thompson (1986 with Louisville, 1987 with the Lakers)

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Answer the stumper question correctly and win one of six SPORT pins. Each month a different pin will be offered. Collect all six and receive a SPORT collector's edition pin box and a free one-year subscription to SPORT!

[This Month's Pin: Tennis]

Fax your answer to Quiz, 212.229.4838, or mail it to 110 Fifth Ave., 4th floor, New York, N.Y. 10011. Limit one per person. All entries must be postmarked by May 25, 2000.

THIS MONTH'S QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Byron Nelson, who accomplished the feat in 1945 2. B (16 years, 3 months) 3. Jamaal Wilkes 4. Cesar Geronimo 5. A (1,099) 6. Mets, Reds, Orioles 7. Kevin Ritz with 39 for Colorado, Pat Rapp with 37 for Florida 8. C (117) 9. Vinny Testaverde, chosen first by Tampa Bay in 1987 after winning the Heisman for Miami (Fla.) 10. Vince Lombardi (Packers, 1967), Bill Walsh (49ers, 1988), Bill Parcells (Giants, 1990), Jimmy Johnson (Cowboys, 1993)

BRIAN TIRPAK

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Be sure to check out the Chevy Silverado Game of the Year Sweepstakes in this issue of Sport. For the next six months, one lucky winner each month will win a pair of tickets to a local game. Then, in August, Chevy Trucks will send one grand prize winner to a game of their choice. See the Chevy Trucks Sport Puzzle page for more details.

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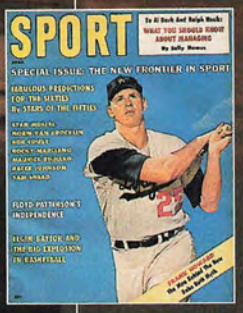
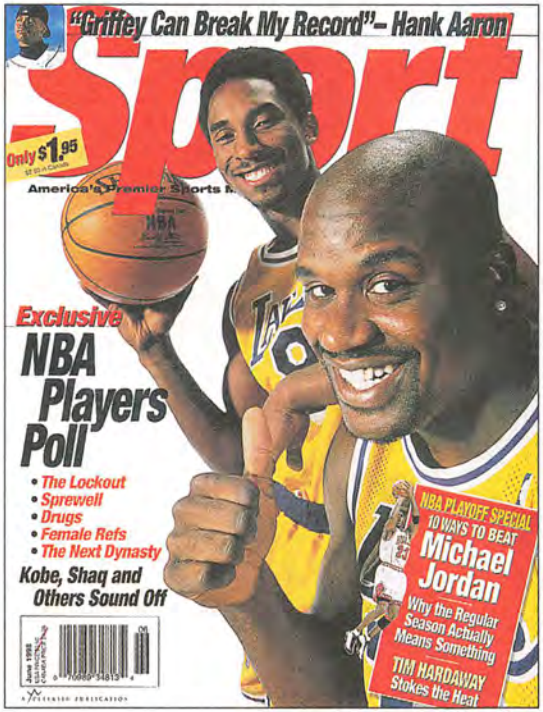

SPORT
SPECIAL ISSUE: THE NEW FRONTIER IN SPORT
FABULOUS PREDICTIONS FOR THE SIXTIES By STARS OF THE FIFTIES
FLOYD PATTERSON'S INDEPENDENCE

In the April 1961 issue of Sport, the magazine's editors focused on a new era of athletes in a special section called "The New Frontier in Sport," asking stars of the '50s for their predictions of the '60s. And although the Ruthian comparisons to Frank Howard seem ridiculous in hindsight, Sport was right on the money with Carl Yastrzemski in Lee Greene's "The Making of a Baseball Star" piece on the rookie who had yet to play his first game with the Boston Red Sox. Greene writes, "Carl Yastrzemski has turned his back on the minor leagues now .... All his life he has been priming himself to make it, and make it big, in the major leagues. Now that he is on the threshold of what could be a brilliant career, there is no false modesty in his attitude .... 'I'd like to keep playing as long as possible, at least 15 years,' he said quietly. 'Business sidelines will never be that important to me. I'm going to be around for a long time.' You never can tell about rookies, but Carl may just be right."



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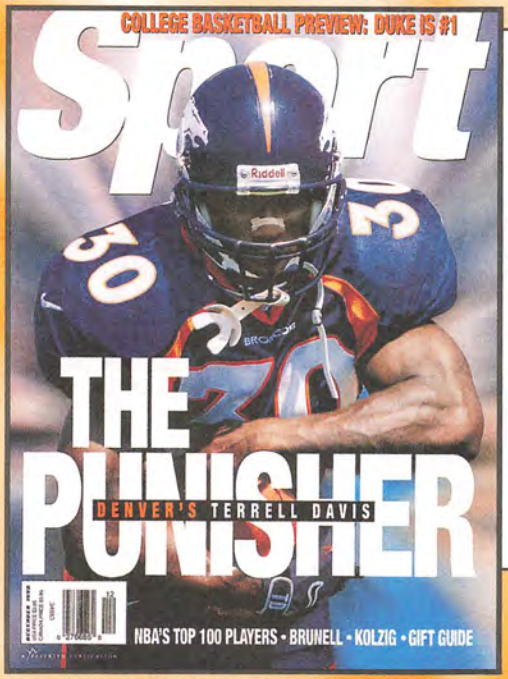

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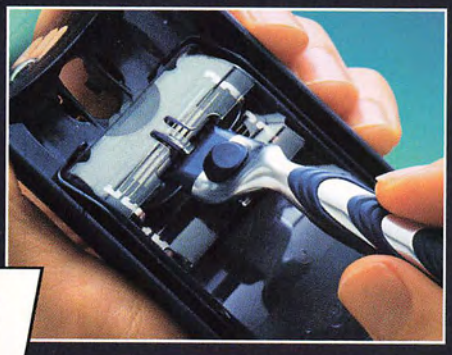

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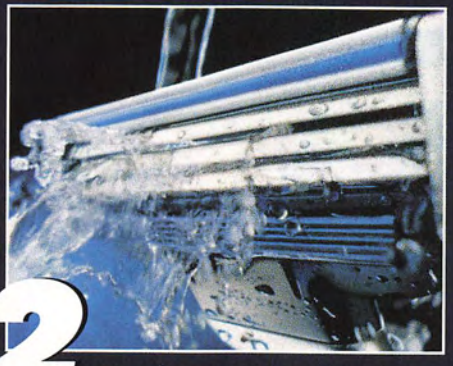

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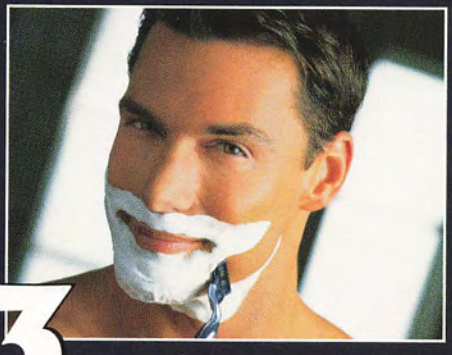

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